THE HOLY GHOST

THE COMFORTER

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THE HOLY GHOST
THE COMFORTER

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THE HOLY GHOST THE COMFORTER

BY

G. F. HOLDEN, M.A.

LATE VICAR OF ALL SAINTS', MARGARET STREET

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

THE BISHOP OF LONDON

FIFTH IMPRESSION

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TO THE DEAR AND TENDER MEMORY
OF ONE WHO,
I DOUBT NOT, HAS, BY NOW, EXPERIENCED
WHAT THE LOVING MINISTRATIONS OF THE HOLY GHOST
MAY MEAN
TO THE SOULS OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED,
I DEDICATE
THIS EFFORT TO EXHIBIT
WHAT HIS MINISTRY OF COMFORT
MAY BE TO THOSE
WHO ARE CALLED TO SERVE HIM
ON THIS EARTHLY PLANE
OF EXISTENCE.

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INTRODUCTION

IT has become a custom that I should recommend some book for Lenten reading to the people in my diocese. It is very often difficult for some lay people to know exactly *what* to read, even when they have got to the point of wishing to read something which will help them with their religious life.

Last year a shortened edition was issued of *Law's Serious Call*, which I commended to the diocese.

This year I asked the author to write a book upon the work of the Holy Spirit, and therefore I feel especially bound to add a few words of Preface.

This does not mean that I should have expressed the truths on which he dwells always in precisely the same way, but it does mean that I believe that he is reminding us in this little book of three truths which we are very apt to forget.

(1) The first is the Personality of God the Holy Ghost. The reasons for the comparative

neglect of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity are well stated in the first chapter, and I feel myself that we shall never see a great spiritual revival in the Church, or in any individual soul, until the "Veni Creator" is said as a real prayer addressed to a real Person.

(2) The second chapter describes what constitutes the real difference between "Church" religion and many other forms of earnest and conscientious belief, and that is the "normal method" employed by the Holy Spirit in approaching the soul.

I think that I should have myself emphasized more strongly the truth that the Holy Spirit does deal *directly* with the soul, which I am sure that the author also believes; but, on the other hand, nothing could be more clearly expressed than our reasons for believing that God normally employs "indirect" methods and that out of consideration for His children who have bodies as well as spirits, He employs "outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace."

Thus on page 26 the author truly says:—

"Christ's miracles tell the same story. Almost always some medium is employed. It is either the human voice, or the human touch, or the anointing with clay, or the employment of the means of water or of bread."

And he continues on page 27 with regard to Christ's solution of the problem of propaganda :—

"He might have acted directly. He might have caused His message of love to be written in flaming letters in the sky, or He might have caused each child born into the world to be born with the knowledge of the conditions of salvation. His methods are widely different, and always indirect. He chose twelve men. On them He builds His great society, the Church; and they are directed to employ external media. Through the simple medium of water the great change of regeneration is effected in Holy Baptism. Through the more complex media of bread and wine there is conveyed to the faithful the Body and the Blood, the very Life of the Redeemer. Through frail and sinful humanity the great gift of Absolution is bestowed. Through the laying on of human hands mankind is to receive its wonderful gift of the Divine indwelling Spirit."

(3) The third truth which I am grateful to the author for stating so clearly is what is meant by the "Sevenfold Gifts" of the Holy Spirit. We pray in the Collect for St. Barnabas Day, "Leave us not destitute of Thy *manifold* gifts," and the beautiful prayer in the Confirmation service names in detail what those special gifts are. But I am sure that many will be grateful to

read the concluding chapters of this little book, and realize a little more clearly the special and different characteristics of "Wisdom and Understanding; Counsel and ghostly Strength; Knowledge and true Godliness, and the Spirit of Thy Holy Fear."

What we have to steer between is a sacramental religion which is mechanical and unspiritual, and a pietistic religion which loses the force and humility and depth which it might have, by ignoring the two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself, and such other sacramental rites as Confirmation, which the Church has used, under, as we believe, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, from the beginning.

It is my hope that this little book may help busy men and women who have no time for deep and prolonged study to have clearer ideas on this matter and be led on to a Christian life which is all the more spiritual because sacramental.

A. F. LONDON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE definitely expressed wish of my Bishop amounts, for me, in all things lawful, to a command. Nothing short of the Bishop of London's request could, I am sure, have induced me to attempt to write on so sacred and profound a subject.

If I had not been only too conscious of an overpowering sense of limitation in both learning and devotion, there are other conditions which would have prevented me.

The charge of a laborious work in London like that of All Saints', Margaret Street, effectually stops both study and authorship. I can only claim that I have tried to do my best, and that failing to find the necessary leisure in London, I devoted to my appointed task the greater part of my holiday this last summer.

It sometimes happens that upon those who are devoid of any real claim to learning or scholarship the Holy Spirit bestows the humbler gift of

making the learning of others more clear to the plain man.

If this little book is destined to be of any service in the spiritual life this coming Lent, it will be found, I think, in some such direction.

The doctrine of God the Holy Ghost has always been to me of absorbing interest, and I can at least claim, in days gone by, to have read somewhat widely upon it.

If I do not mention any authorities on the subject to whom I am under great obligation, it is merely because they are so many in number that it is equally difficult either to make a selection or to compile an inclusive list.

To the proprietors of the *Short Office of the Holy Ghost* I am indebted for kind permission to include some of the prayers out of that excellent little manual of prayer.

The Bishop of London says in his Introduction that probably he would have laid more stress upon the *direct* action of the Holy Spirit, and he is good enough to say that doubtless I am a believer in such *direct* action. In this he does me no more than justice. For many years past I have had far too certain a consciousness of the presence of the Holy Spirit within not to heartily confirm his charitable judgment. But I have been concerned with the *normal* method of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of objective grace,

which I am profoundly convinced needs in these days to be stated with special emphasis. Had time permitted, I fully intended to try to write two additional chapters upon "The Fellowship of the Holy Ghost" and "The Holy Spirit and the human spirit." Some day, should this little work turn out to be of service, perhaps the experiment might be made.

In any case, there is great need of a book which combines both teaching and devotion upon these subjects, and which might well include "The Fruit of the Spirit and His Symbols." Perhaps this suggestion may induce some one better qualified than I am to undertake the work.

I most humbly beseech that Blessed Spirit of God, Whose loving ministry of comfort in the darker days of life none, I am sure, can have experienced more than I, to bless in this book all that is in accordance with His Holy Will, to pardon and overrule for good anything in it which may be contrary thereto, and to grant to all who may read it a deeper realization of His own most gracious Presence.

G. F. H.

All Saints' Vicarage,
Margaret Street, W.
Advent, 1907.

THE HOLY GHOST

I

THE NEGLECT OF THE HOLY GHOST

IT would be almost impossible to overstate the difference between the stress which in Holy Scripture is placed upon the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the part which that doctrine plays in the practical and devotional life of the modern Christian. Devotion to the Holy Spirit is the supreme want of present-day Christianity, and it is in the humble hope that this little book may do something, however small, to increase that devotional life that I venture on the task of writing it.

(A) It will repay us to try and trace out some of the reasons for this strange and portentous contrast.

(1) I am inclined to place first amongst these reasons *the absence of controversy about the Holy Spirit.* That there is a sad and terrible side to Christian controversy goes without saying. When pushed to extremes of bitterness, malignant mis-

representation, and neglect of that spirit of charity "which believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," possibly it contains within it the supreme manifestation of the anti-Christian spirit. But there is much to be said on the other side. Controversy even in its worst form is always a sign of interest, and the most stormy of the controversial ages of Church history always present us with this invaluable compensation. Even our English habit of conducting the most sacred of discussions in the daily press is not without its good side. At any rate, it shows that in spite of a serious declension in the outward expression of religion, a very real and in some ways pathetic interest still remains. Practically since the Great Schism between East and West in the eleventh century, of which controversy about the Double Procession of the Holy Spirit was a main cause, there has been little or no controversy on the subject, and, in my judgment, with disastrous results. The thoughts of the Church absorbed in less spiritual issues have been sadly diverted from this subject. There is such a thing as the hallowing even of controversy, and a recognition of its rightful position in the evolution of that which is spiritual.

(2) Second to the absence of controversy, which always seems to me to be the main if remote cause of modern neglect of the Holy Spirit, I should

place as true, at any rate of English Christianity, *the lack of clear thinking upon the function and work of the Holy Spirit.* Many writers on the spiritual life have conjectured that in our English religious life there may be a too exclusive, certainly an unbalanced and disproportionate, devotion to the Second Person in the Most Holy Trinity. It is no wonder that it should be so. All devout Christians must be exposed to it when they lift up thankful hearts for God's unspeakable gift, when they meditate upon the unveiling, the self-emptying, the infinite condescension of the eternal "Word of God." Just as nemesis has overtaken us for our neglect of the Fatherhood of God in ways too many to be mentioned here, so, to an even greater degree, has it come upon us for our yet greater neglect of the Third Person in the Holy Trinity. The perfection of Christian prayer is attained when we approach the Father through the Son in the Power of the Holy Spirit. If we could inquire, I am afraid too seldom we should find this completed devotion offered, and too frequently prayer is offered exclusively to Our Blessed Lord. All this is, in the main, due to failure to understand what is the place of the Holy Spirit in the devout life. Dimly and imperfectly we understand something of the Fatherhood of God. More clearly, if in an unbalanced manner, we grasp the sublime truth of

the Incarnation. But the Third Person in the mystery of the Holy Trinity is to many, I am quite convinced, more or less meaningless. As orthodox Christians, of course we accept the doctrine. But it conveys little or no meaning to us, and so, by degrees, all thought about, all devotion to, the Holy Spirit dies out. The reality of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit is brought home to the faithful in various ways. I can only say how—now many years ago—it first came to myself, and has ever since abided. The Holy Spirit's special work is to be interpreted by His eternal relationship in the Godhead. Of course, in all these great truths we can only employ human terms to express divine realities, and we must recognize their limitations. The Holy Spirit has been called the "Osculum Patris et Filii" (the "*kiss* of the Father and the Son"). It is but the concrete expression of the phrase of the apostle, "the Unity of the Spirit." He is the bond of unity between the Father and the Son, and therefore His essential function is that of *uniting*. Eternally and temporally He is the *Unifier*.

We cannot do better than trace out this great function of the Holy Spirit in the clauses of the third portion of the Apostles' Creed, all of which depend absolutely upon the first great clause, "I believe in the Holy Ghost."

What is the Holy Catholic Church but the ap-

pointed instrument of the Holy Spirit for uniting mankind to God? The Communion of Saints, from one point of view, is an extension of this idea into wider spheres beyond the grave, into which sublime mystery we must not enter. From another point of view it reveals to us that Sanctifying Stream of Spiritual Life which, passing through the Blessed in the Highest Heaven, permeates the vast community of the blessed dead in the Intermediate State, and after flowing through the Church Militant here on earth, returns back to the Heavenly Throne, thus combining, thus uniting into one all the faithful people of God, living and departed.

The same great function may no less clearly be traced in the doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sins. What is the essence of unforgiveness but separation and disunion? and in the last analysis of the idea of pardon and forgiveness, what have we but the restoration and the reuniting of those who have been separated? Absolution is only another word for once more uniting the soul that hath sinned to the God Whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity. It is deeply significant that in Holy Scripture, as also in the Service of the Ordering of Priests, this function is closely associated with the Holy Spirit. "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose-soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose-soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

"The Resurrection of the Body"—a doctrine at once so mysterious and so essential—reveals the same great truth. What is death but the temporary separation of two factors which are quite essential to each other—the material and the spiritual? Man never was purely spiritual, nor throughout eternity is he to be so. The spiritual demands a medium through which it can express itself. In the Intermediate State the soul is refreshed by the loving ministries of the Holy Spirit. In His own good time, the spiritual body, thoroughly adequate to the needs of the perfected soul, and no longer a clog and hindrance to its activities, will be finally united to it. And what can we say of the life eternal but the same thing? It is the completion of the Holy Spirit's work. By His operation each faithful soul built up into the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ, transformed into the perfect image and pattern of the second Adam, stands before the Most High in the great day of the restitution of all things, with nothing between. Eternal life is but another word, as we picture its completion, for eternal reunion with God.

So vital then is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. So does eternity itself depend upon our relation to the mission of the Comforter.

(3) There is a third reason for modern neglect of the Holy Spirit, which lies deep down in the human heart—*the aversion of the natural man to*

the things of the Spirit. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Now we must not exaggerate this statement. The Catholic Church knows nothing of the doctrine of the total depravity of man, and she reverences and treasures the natural virtues; but the fact remains that it is only with effort and by the help of the Divine assistance that the natural man can arrive at the hidden beauty and glory of revealed truth. It is quite amazing to see how readily he will put away from him all the elementary facts of religion, which, if true, are of the most vital moment to him. God, the soul, the life to come, are lightly set on one side, and too often are not seriously considered until some great shock of sorrow has come into his life. In the natural man also the Holy Scriptures, which to the enlightened are the most absorbingly interesting literature in the world, excite little or no interest, and they receive but a conventional reverence.

It is, then, no wonder that the Person and work of the Holy Spirit are neglected. If Mr. Browning could say of his poetry that it was not written for light treatment — that it demanded and deserved the most serious attention of the reader—we may say something of the same kind, only infinitely intensified, of the relation of the

natural man to the things of the Spirit. It is only by the most strenuous devotion, by prayer, by meditation, by constant and sustained effort to keep open the avenues of spiritual approach within us that the realization of the Holy Spirit's work can be attained. For those who will so apply themselves to His service He has the richest and most blessed rewards.

(4) Another cause of our failure to realize the doctrine of the Holy Spirit *is the presence of sin.* Sin generally, sin as it expresses and concentrates itself in some one habitual evil—sin more particularly of the body—always tends to quench the Holy Spirit. I do not mean to say that bodily sin is the worst form of moral evil. If I read the Gospel aright, it seems to me that spiritual and not bodily evil called forth the Saviour's sternest denunciations. Nay, I am thankful to be able to trace a wonderful tenderness and gentleness in His relation to those who had fallen into grievous bodily sin. It may be that He knew, as none else, that the nemesis which dogs the footsteps of bodily evil is that of despair and gradual disbelief in the power of conquest. All this is true; and all priests who have had to deal with the appalling factor of bodily sin know that the first condition of repentance is to plant the grace of Hope into those sad lives. It may be that, as has been finely said, the wretched drunkard, for example,

at the last great day will stand before our Lord in a more acceptable position than the proud, the untruthful, the unloving.

And yet it is written, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The Divine image can only be reflected in broken lights in the passion-swept soul. As in some calm lake the mountains are most clearly reflected, so the vision of the Eternal can only be seen in those whose lives are free from gross bodily evil.

Alas! if our roots are so deeply sunk in the material and the sensual that we cannot see the heavenly vision! The quest of the Holy Ghost must be a serious one. It must be the great object of the life. It cannot be treated as a mere side issue. But, indeed, those will seek it in vain who are not engaged in strenuous conflict with all the forces of evil, but especially with the terrible onslaughts of the flesh. "These are contrary the one to the other."

(B) A consideration of some of the causes of the neglect of the Holy Spirit's Person and work does indeed repay analysis, but I think some of the *results* of that neglect are of even greater value in their warning. (1) It is difficult to say how far the statement is true historically, but it has been said that since the Great Schism between East and West, and as a result of the absence of interest in the Holy Spirit's Person and work, which may

directly be traced to that event, there has been a remarkable paucity in the number and the greatness of the saints. There is some truth in the statement, as a matter of fact, though other reasons might account for the declension in sanctity—at any rate, to some extent. But it is obvious that if the very fount of sanctity is neglected, it must result in some such calamity. Certainly devotion to the Holy Spirit has always been one very sure and certain mark of the saints, and a glance at the Calendar will, I think, show a marked preponderance of saintly lives in the earlier days of the Church's history. Persecution, with the quickening reality it brings, may have had something to do with it, no doubt. But I am convinced that the main cause is more simple. If we could revive in the Church of God a deeper sense of His Person and work, we should also have a wonderful revival of saintliness amongst us. As we look back along the life of the Church, we seem to see the great saints standing out like great rocks in the weary land of humanity, under whose shadow the garden of the Lord has thriven unto perfection. Because they existed we lesser men can exist. How sore is the need of the Church for great and saintly men nowadays, and how earnestly should we implore the Holy Spirit to raise up His power and come amongst us and enrich us by such lives.

(2) In England, a second result of neglect of the Holy Spirit has certainly been an obscuring of the idea of the Church as an integral portion of the deposit of Faith. The Church of God is no mere convenient instrument for the perpetuation of the Truth. It is part of the Truth itself. It is a Gospel of the Kingdom we are to proclaim, and if the Catholic Church is not the only expression of that Kingdom, it is something so very near it that the expression itself is meaningless, without this its chief manifestation. The Church Catholic is the Spirit-bearing body, the special home of the Holy Spirit's activities. This idea is quite compatible with a recognition of the Holy Spirit's manifold energies in all life, and in special degree in every activity of human life, alike amongst the Heathen, in the Jewish Church, and in the separated communities of Christian people. But in the Catholic Church we have the assured and guaranteed ministries of the One Spirit. Here are the certificated points of contact with the Eternal in the Sacramental system, and here are to be found the Spirit's assurance of the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures and His authorized exposition of their meaning. According to S. Paul, the Church is something even beyond this. "It is the body of Christ, the completeness of Him who all in all is being completed." The very variegated wisdom of the Most High is by the Church, to be

made known to principalities and powers in the heavenly sphere. It is the supreme Divine secret, the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of all this in present day controversies. Amongst the gravest signs of the times is the attempt which is being made to eliminate the idea of the Church in religious education. Did we believe more thoroughly in the doctrine of the Holy Ghost we should believe more earnestly in the Church as His Chosen Home, the abode of His most certain and blessed ministries.

(3) There can be little question that the unity of the Church is to be one of the most potent signs in securing the allegiance of the world to Christ. "I in them and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that Thou hast sent me." For our unhappy divisions there may be extenuating circumstances. Certainly we must never purchase a disastrous and dishonourable peace by the surrender of one iota of principle. But still less may we contentedly acquiesce in such a lamentable state of things. As the Holy Spirit is the fount of Unity, so the surest road out of our difficulties in this relation will be through a greater recognition of His relation to Christian life and conduct. While there are great lines of division amongst Chris-

tians, which as far as we can see are parallel and in this life, seemingly, can never meet, it is well also to remember that these are few in number, and that there is a whole cycle of Christian doctrine about which we ought not to differ, but about which we do differ, mainly because the spirit of charitable interpretation is wanting, and concerning which I am fully persuaded we should not differ, did we betake ourselves more to the Holy Spirit in sincere petitions for a right judgment in all things.

It is a long step towards reunion when we can induce ourselves, in a spirit of charity, to form our opinion of what others believe by what they say themselves, and not by what we think they should say; and it is the Divine Charity which is the Holy Spirit's best gift. There is at least one vast basis for common action, if not for common worship, in the recognition of our Blessed Lord as God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, and no one can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.

(4) And what shall I say of the loss there is to our spiritual life in the neglect of the Guide, Comforter, and Loving Friend of the faithful?

Years ago I remember Dr. Liddon saying at Oxford that if any one would but try the experiment of saying the "Veni Creator" once every day for a year, he would be astonished at the end of that time to find how much spiritual insight

had been granted. To those who are called to advise others there is no condition so certain to secure counsel and guidance as that of abiding union with the same Blessed Spirit. In the darkest moments of our life, when we cry out in our agony, "All Thy waves and storms are gone over me," and when sometimes we are called to taste something of the bitter desolation which our Lord experienced on the Cross, when we too cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" it is the power of the Holy Ghost which sustains, and it is His gentle and loving hand which dries the tears and brings the peace of God to the stricken heart. Amid the perplexities and doubts of this period of transition in religious thought, when the old truths are being re-stated, and not seldom mis-stated, it is again only in the guidance of the Holy Spirit within and without that we can rest with any confidence. Our Lord promised that another Comforter should come, and the experience of an innumerable company of His children declares that He has been true to His word, with a richness and fulness they cannot find words to express.

"O Most Holy Trinity, in the everflowing abundance of Thy Love sending forth the Holy Ghost the Paraclete, to create and form Thy Church, the mystical Body of Christ; grant to us to be ever fervent in the Unity of the Spirit, that

always abiding in Thy worship and service, we may grow more and more steadfast in Faith, Hope, and Charity, more and more patient and active in all good works, to the honour and glory of Thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." (From the "Short Office of the Holy Ghost.")

II

THE NORMAL METHOD OF THE HOLY GHOST

HOW does the Holy Spirit approach the human soul? At first sight it might seem that there could be but one answer to this question, and that, the answer which one section of Christendom has adopted since the Reformation. The approach of the Holy Spirit to the human spirit surely will be through avenues which are purely spiritual. Deeper reflection, however, leads to a totally different conclusion—at any rate, in relation to His normal methods. Apart altogether from the general evidence we have of His ordinary mode and manner of approach, it is at least a much-debated question as to whether avenues of approach to the human soul which are purely spiritual in any strict sense of the term are thinkable. But it will repay us to consider the whole question as thoroughly as we can.

(A) How is a human being, a composite creature composed of body and soul, each the complement of the other, to be approached by the Eternal

Spirit? The question is no sooner asked than we are aware of two main answers, which go deep down into human controversy almost as long as we can trace human thought, and which have deeply divided Christendom for the last three hundred years.

I dislike using terms which suggest controversy, and the very last wish I have in writing this little book is to accentuate our unhappy divisions, but for the sake of clearness of treatment it is necessary to use very distinctive terms.

There is first of all the Puritan answer. Born and bred amongst such surroundings, I think I am stating the Puritan position not unfairly when I say it amounts very much to this: the Holy Spirit normally deals *directly* with the soul. As we are constituted it is of course impossible to avoid using some external media in religion, but that use always has in it a serious element of danger as an intrusion of a third element in the relation of the soul to its Maker. It is to be watched with grave suspicion, and it is to be guarded and restrained with the utmost care. The less we have to do with outward forms or material agencies for the spiritual the better. Until recent days this conception of the normal relation of the Eternal Spirit to the human spirit was reflected in the very buildings designed for public worship, and to this day it is still most clearly to be traced in

either an indifference to, or a suspicious attitude towards, or an unreasoned and reluctant acquiescence in, the Sacramental system, with its basis of material agency and sacerdotal ministry.

On the other hand, there is the Catholic answer. It is an answer which differs sharply from what has just been stated.

The material is not to be suspect, but to be hallowed. The Eternal Spirit uses a thousand means, channels, instruments, through which He approaches the human spirit. His normal methods are *indirect*. The Sacramental system is vital to the Christian idea. The surest way of attaining to eternal life is to stoop in deepest humility, to use the humblest external means which the Church sanctions.

I do not see how there can ever be any compromise in relation to these two positions. The difference is fundamental. But I am quite certain that the road to Christian charity is to try and find out what views Christian men really hold, and then, though we may differ as widely as we do on this elementary question, we can at least respect each other's conscientious views. If the Puritan honestly believes that forms and ceremonies, and priesthood, and the external aids to devotion come between his soul and his Creator, let him refrain from using them. I, for one, can understand and respect such a view, though I cannot agree with

it. But let him recognize that his Catholic brother has a totally different conception of the Divine method, and that he finds his quickest and most certain approach to God through what he regards as the appointed means. It is always a puzzle to me why Christian men should fight about such things, and seemingly to the bitter end. Each school of thought is honestly following out what it considers is the Divine Will. Surely there might be a truce of God based upon some such charitable recognition of a sincere desire to follow the will of God so far as it is honestly accepted.

(B) But in a book which is concerned as far as possible to arrive at a rightful conception of the Holy Spirit's Person and work, the question cannot thus be left alone. We must ask ourselves a further question: Which view is right? Can we arrive with any approximate certainty at the normal method which the Holy Spirit follows? I am convinced we can, and I am equally convinced that the method which the historic Church has accepted for the greater part of the Christian era without question is the true one. In other words, I believe, with an intensity of conviction which ever grows stronger the longer I live, that the Catholic answer is the right one. The Holy Spirit uses an almost infinite number of indirect agencies in reaching the human soul. The faithful must stoop to conquer, and with all humility

must use all the many agencies which the Church sanctions. It will be well worth our while to study for a short time in this chapter the basis on which the Catholic position rests.

(1) The God of grace is also the God of nature, and the normal methods in nature are indirect. I say the *normal* methods, for, of course, exceptions can at once be produced without difficulty, and we cannot and dare not tie down that free Spirit of God, whose action, like the wind which bloweth where it listeth, is unrestrained.

It is a trite saying that the mediatorial system is writ large upon God's world of nature, but it is so trite that sometimes its significance is overlooked. This world is held in space by a balance of forces, one of which repels it from and the other attracts it to the sun. The very air we breathe is composed of a nice adjustment of opposing gases, of which, if the composition were altered in very slight degree, all life would at once fade and die. We have but to think of the simplest flower or fruit, and of the innumerable chains of media which have been called into play to produce it, to see how obvious is this truth. But I must limit an almost limitless subject and turn to the human creature, where we find the principle at work in most conspicuous degree.

It is through the medium of parents we come into existence, and we are sustained in existence

through manifold instrumentalities. It is at least thinkable that the Creator might have formed a creature capable of sustaining itself without the external medium of food. It is quite clear that He did not do so. Day by day the wearisome process must be gone through if we are to exist at all. To imagine it is possible to go on otherwise, constitutes, as is very well known, one of the first symptoms of an unbalanced mind.

It is also thinkable that the Creator might have made us less complex in the inner relation of our bodily organs, and therefore less liable to suffer from disorder within. The machine, we sometimes think, might have been simpler, and so formed as not to get out of order. Or if, indeed, in the nature of things, disorder must arise, would it not have been more simple, as it certainly would have been more direct, if we could have known by instinct what is the trouble within when we fall ill, and what are the best remedies to apply. God does not work in that fashion at all. Certain members of the race must spend their time in the study of the structure of the human body, and the relation of certain medicines to that structure. However foolishly men may belittle the work of the physician, we know that he comes from God, that the Lord hath created him, that from the Most High cometh healing, that the Lord hath created medicines out

of the earth, and that he that is wise will not abhor them. If the first sign of an unbalanced mind is the refusal of food, the second, we may well say, is the rejection of the God-given medium of medical help.

But it is in the region of the general education of the race that the principle of indirect action is most clearly to be traced, for there at times it seems to be pushed almost to the extent of wastefulness. When some great intellect passes into eternity, how great would be the strides of human progress if all that stored-up knowledge could be transferred by some direct action to another living brain! With what leaps and bounds would knowledge advance if each child born into the world could start with the knowledge of the last generation completely stored up within as a basis from which to begin its new life! The methods of God are far from being such. Nothing can excuse the child the weary round of elementary instruction in reading and writing and arithmetic. It depends for its very existence entirely for a time upon the ministrations of others; and if, as is indeed true, each generation does show some advance in the amount of inherited knowledge from which it starts its career, the advance is amazingly slow. Nothing can avert the necessity of dependence upon others throughout each intellectual life from beginning to end. All life is coloured with the

mediatorial principle, which is only another term for indirect action. If the God of Grace is the God of Nature, and it is dangerous in the extreme to question it, then we may expect to find the same principle at work in His Kingdom of Grace.

(2) Is this so? If it were not so, I think the position would be very grave indeed, and to me, at any rate, would raise grave doubts as to the truth not of natural, but of revealed religion. The methods of the Holy Spirit, however, in the sphere of religion are plain enough in this relation. I leave out of consideration altogether the evidence which might be collected from the great natural religions of mankind, of customs and ceremonies, darkened indeed by superstition and degraded by hideous cruelty and hidden depths of depravity, which nevertheless, when analyzed, are generally found to witness to great and true principles of Divine action. I turn to the great revelation of God as we have it in the Old Testament. What are the methods of the Holy Spirit which can clearly be traced in those sacred writings? Are they direct or indirect? There cannot be much hesitation about the answer. It is impossible to bring into this chapter great questions like those of the historic value of the earlier narratives of Genesis. It is sufficient here, and now, to say that whatever be their historic value, the great principles which underlie those wonderful old stories

are as valuable as ever they were. When God made man, did He make him according to the sacred narrative directly or indirectly? "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Out of pre-existing materia was the human creature formed, whether we take the story in its primitive simplicity and leave it as expressing an eternal truth in mythical form, or whether we translate it into modern terms and see in it a suggestion of evolution from lower forms of the inanimate into the animate, and the animate into the self-conscious and self-reflecting being dowered with the Divine Image.

It is not necessary to labour the point. The Old Testament is full of illustrations of the same great principle of spiritual action. The apparition through the burning bush to Moses, the brazen serpent in the wilderness, the method of attack upon Jericho, the cure of Naaman the Syrian, are a few out of an innumerable number of instances which might be produced from the sacred narratives, while the whole system of the law, ceremonial, social and moral, only re-proves the proved.

(3) It is when we turn to the New Testament that we find the principle seriously questioned. It is supposed that our Lord's teaching and prac-

tice involve the conception of a religion which is purely spiritual, and which has discarded, so far as it may be safely done, the use of external media for religious purposes. But is this really so? I leave altogether on one side the great question of the relation of the two Covenants, and the truth that, as distinct from details, there are very few great principles of action in the Old Covenant which may not be traced in the New. The two Covenants are intertwined. While it is true a Christian must not be brought into bondage to the Jewish law in its detail, he cannot escape, even if he wished, from relation to the great principles of religion in the Old Covenant. They are eternal in their nature, and pass legitimately, coloured of course with the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, into the New Covenant. This question is, however, too vast for our space. I turn to the positive side of the Christian dispensation, and I ask, What does its central truth of the Incarnation teach us but this same great principle of the Holy Spirit's indirect action? "Yet doth He devise means that His banished be not expelled from Him." It is, of course, thinkable that Almighty God might have *coerced* mankind into reluctant obedience, but He never works in that way. Our free-will is respected. The great "miracle of repair" is effected. The Second Person in the Holy Trinity tabernacles amongst us in human form. The

Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us. For us men and for our salvation He came down from Heaven, and was Incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man. As this great principle is at the very root of the idea of the Incarnation, so is it clearly revealed in the life of our Incarnate God. For thirty years of His short life He worked to support His mother, using the ordinary means which ordinary people must employ to earn their daily bread. His adversaries constantly demand some great direct proof of His claim such as a sign from Heaven would afford, and as often are they refused. It is difficult to doubt that a suggestion to forsake the normal indirect action was at the root of the second temptation. Had the Saviour floated down from the top of the Temple, borne up by invisible hands, would not this have been the very sign from Heaven for which they craved? His claims would at once have been accepted. His miracles tell the same story. Almost always some medium is employed. It is either the human voice, or the human touch, or the anointing with clay, or the employment of the means of water or bread. So it is with His parables. The simplest incidents of daily life are closely studied and fearlessly employed to proclaim eternal truth. No less clearly can we trace it in His solution of the problem of propaganda. How was the gulf between those

He willed to save in the twentieth century and those in the first century to be bridged over? He might have acted directly. He might have caused His message of love to be written in flaming letters in the sky, or He might have caused each child born into the world to be born with the knowledge of the conditions of salvation. His methods are widely different, and always indirect. He chose twelve men. On them He builds His great society, the Church; and they are directed to employ external media. Through the simple medium of water the great change of regeneration is effected in Holy Baptism. Through the more complex media of bread and wine there is conveyed to the faithful the Body and the Blood, the very Life of the Redeemer. Through frail and sinful humanity the great gift of Absolution is bestowed. Through the laying on of human hands mankind is to receive its wonderful gift of the Divine indwelling Spirit.

(C) It is sufficient, of course, for us to know that such is obviously the method of the Divine Spirit, and, having that knowledge, to use it or perish. But the question does inevitably arise as to why the Holy Spirit should employ this indirect method of action, and I think that it will strengthen our loyal determination to obey His will if we can see a clear reason. There are many, but there is at least one which appears to be quite conclusive

on the hypothesis of the truth of the doctrine of the Fall of Man. Deep down in that old story of the Fall of Man in the earlier narratives of Genesis there will be found embedded the profoundest philosophy of life and the profoundest spiritual truth. What qualities were at the root of the Fall according to the narrative? There is no hesitation about the answer. Pride and disobedience were the twin vices of our undoing. Then what qualities must be at the root of our restoration? Again, there can be no hesitation, on the Christian hypothesis, as to the answer. Humility and obedience are vital to our restoration. God has chosen very simple things as tests of these great qualities. It is a humbling of our pride to begin like a child, to use the simplest means whereby we soonest may attain. It is a searching test of our obedience whether, in childlike simplicity, we will do as we are told, knowing that God knows how best to save, or whether we will go our own way, wilful like our first parents, claiming to know better than God.

(D) But this question of the Holy Spirit's methods goes deeper still. It contains within it no less vital a question than that of the relation of Christianity to the material world. From the earliest days there has been a suspicion in human thought that matter may be inherently evil, that it is the antithesis of spirit which came to be

regarded as the principle of good. We know that some such conception colours many non-Christian religious systems at the present day, and we know that at times the idea has effected a lodgment even in Christian thought. What is the real message of Christ to the material world? Surely it confirms all that we have thought in our best moments, when nature seems to speak of God, when every snowy peak of the mountains and every rippling wave of the sea, as it sparkles in the sun, are sacramental of the love of God. The Incarnation has hallowed the material for ever. As we gaze upon the material world, bathed as it is now in that golden light, we seem to see it ever rising to greater heights of dignity, and ever marching on to some glorious destiny. We get a little glimpse of the splendid destiny that awaits it as we think of the risen, ascended, and glorified Humanity now seated in Heavenly splendour at the right hand of God. The Holy Spirit's method which we have been considering in this chapter, especially that method as it finds expression in the Sacramental system, is but one example of the mission of honour which Christianity has to extend to the material world as a whole. It is something to know that while its glories are not to be compared to that which is to come, and are destined to fade away, we may offer thanksgiving to the Giver of all good gifts for His infinite

mercies to His human children in the material world, and that they may use without scruple its innocent and manifold gifts. Certainly we can see how the Holy Spirit hallows all the natural gifts and graces in mankind of music and art, for, fused by His grace, are not these things seen at their highest? In our devotional life we need not hesitate thankfully to use all the external aids which have the sanction of the Church.

"O Almighty God, Who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; Grant unto Thy people, that they may love the thing which Thou commandest, and desire that which Thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

III

THE APPROACH OF THE HOLY GHOST

THE approach of the Holy Spirit to mankind at Pentecost was but the culmination of a long series of approaches on His part to Cosmos —this ordered Creation in which our lot is cast. To spend a little time and trouble over this aspect of His work is very well worth while, and I shall devote this chapter exclusively to it.

(A) "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." This is the Biblical expression of the sublime truth of the approach of the Holy Spirit to this inanimate world of nature. Like all other great systems of thought which have lasted because of the truth that is in them, Pantheism still survives. If there is one feature of modern religious thought which is characteristic, it is beyond question a deeper realization of the Divine Immanence in nature and in man, which perhaps we may rightly describe as the good side of the Pantheistic view of Creation. I know it is to be

balanced by other great truths, and especially that greatest of truths which the Catholic doctrine of the Holy Trinity secures, that if we adore the presence of God the Holy Spirit in nature, we are at the same time never to forget that God also transcends nature. If in His good pleasure "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made," none the less is it true that we must not tie the Godhead to His Creation. Behind all things is the Eternal Godhead, untouched, uncontrolled, absolute, all that is expressed by the Fatherhood of God. Yet the Spirit of God is in nature, and in that Divine Immanence is at once the Divine endorsement upon processes which are common to nature and a claim upon the reverent regard of mankind in the handling of natural things. "God saw that it was good"; and those who are formed in the Divine image will be quick to trace that goodness everywhere, even though it be obscured through the action of the Fall.

(B) A yet higher avenue of approach demands our attention. In the words of the Nicene Creed, the Holy Spirit is "the Giver of Life." The formative energy in life comes from Him. Of course, the whole idea of that which, for want of a better term, we call life, in the last analysis is wrapped in impenetrable mystery. It is the

puzzle still of science. As yet the gaps between inanimate matter and life, and between life and self-conscious life, have not been bridged over. Its origin on this planet is still a hidden secret, unless the conjecture—and it is no more than a conjecture—that it came to us from some other world upon a meteoric stone be accepted. Even then the difficulty is merely thrown further back. It is sufficient for us that it comes from the Holy Spirit, and that the life we share with the creatures is infinitely honourable and always to be respected.

I do not doubt that some remnant of the primeval belief in the dignity of ordinary creaturely life accounts for the survival in some of the Eastern religions of so great a conception of the value and dignity of a living thing because it *is* a living thing, that the elect amongst them will never dare to take life. Such a view is far from being either Jewish or Christian. The human creature, of course, has the right to take the life of other creatures where there is adequate reason. Is it, however, very wide of the Christian mark to say that, inasmuch as all life is intimately associated with no less a Being than the Third Person of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, it should only be taken under circumstances of great necessity, and then with the minimum of suffering? If the presence of the Holy Spirit in inanimate nature constitutes a claim to reverence in the

treatment of the natural world, then the relation of the Holy Spirit to creaturely life demands a yet deeper respect in our handling of it. It has sometimes been said, and the saying is a bitter one to those who love God's creatures, that Christianity *per se* has no message to the lower animals, and that in some Christian countries cruelty to the lower animals is unrebuked as sin. To me these words from the Nicene Creed are sufficient answer. If the ill-treatment of the lower animals passes unrebuked as sin, then it is from ignorance of the Christian message to creaturely life, not from any endorsement of conduct which, in view of the Holy Spirit's relation to life, is nothing less than an outrage upon His Creation.

(C) But as life rises in the scale of being there is ever a fresh approach of the Holy Spirit. I know the idea is questioned by authorities of great repute, but to me the statement in the Old Testament of the creation of man confirms in a wonderful way all that we have learnt from science of the evolution of the human creature from lower forms of life. "And the Lord God formed *man* of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man *became* a living soul." It would seem that it was on a soulless human creature the Divine Spirit came, and man became a living soul. "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him."

Man stands at the summit of creaturely life as we know it, closely allied with the life below him, but also closely allied to the Divine life above him. Who shall dare to attempt any full exposition of all that is meant by the Divine Image? But at least it implies a creature dowered with powers of self-reflection and sense of responsibility, capable of progress, with powers of invention and discovery, with imagination and forethought, with moral qualities which demand a social environment, and above all with a capacity for realizing the Eternal and adoring his Creator.

It is to such a creature the Holy Spirit now comes. Here He is to achieve His greatest triumphs. Here, alas! He is to meet with His greatest disappointments and His greatest griefs. Here in the sacred and glorified Humanity of the Christ He is to find a fitting instrument for His sacred activities, a perfect medium for His sanctifying ministries. Here, alas! baffled for the time in the mass of mankind, He is to fall back upon the great principle of selection or election, only to find again and again in the mystery of human free will the imperfection of the instruments He has chosen.

(D) So we trace His approach to select natures, more particularly to Abraham and to the Ancient Church of God, which sprang from that great and Rocklike man, who is still to-day reverenced by

the three great religions of the world—Christian, Jewish, and Mohammedan. In the approach of the Holy Spirit to the Ancient Church we trace at once a gigantic advance. One most striking line of advance has been incorporated into the Nicene Creed in the words, "He spake by the Prophets." We are learning more and more that ancient prophecy was more forthtelling than foretelling, that the Prophets were the moral agents of the Holy Spirit to the ancient people of God, and I, for one, rejoice in the new light which this conception of their mission has thrown upon the Old Testament writings. But the activities of the Holy Spirit most certainly must not be confined to the prophetical utterances, whether predictive or otherwise. The natural and artistic powers in man are now revealed as His gift. In Exodus xxxi. 2, 5, we read: "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel . . . and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones . . . And in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship." It is nothing less than the hallowing of the artistic. All administrative powers in the government and control of man are now seen to spring from Him. In Num-

bers xi. 17, when the seventy who were to assist Moses in the government of the people were gathered together, we read: "And I will come down and talk with them: and I will take of the Spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee." It is the hallowing of things political and of all statecraft. But it is impossible to enlarge further upon so vast a topic. At this point I think it may be well to review in general outline the Old Testament revelation of the Holy Spirit. Three points at least claim our attention:

(1) There is very strong emphasis upon the natural virtues. In the Ancient Church as in the Catholic Church there is a very clear recognition of all natural gifts as from God and to be reverenced as such. We need reminding of this. Too often there is an attempt to build up the life we live into watertight compartments, and to make a sharp division between the secular and the sacred. Archbishop Benson has well said that, after all, "there is nothing secular save what is sinful," and we need to be reminded that the simplest daily duties we are called upon to perform are part of the Divine plan. Where is the sense or reason in speaking of the corn as it grows as a Divine process, and the working up of the same corn into flour or bread as secular work?

Both are sacred, and both are part of the Divine plan. What stimulus to zeal and what an incentive to thoroughness in our so-called secular calling it would give if we could but realize that in this, as in all else, if it be a lawful and an honest calling, we are nothing less than the agents of the Holy Spirit!

(2) I think it is true to say, though the statement should be balanced in other ways, that, on the whole, in the Old Testament the Holy Spirit is there regarded as a sort of formative energy. The truth of His Personality, to say the least of it, is veiled. Of course, it is also true that Christians who have realized the sublime fact of the Personality of the Holy Spirit will discern many traces of that fact in the ancient writings of the people of God, just as, I believe from my heart, they can trace the great truth of the Holy Trinity. It is there to our enlightened eyes, but I doubt if it was there to the ancient people of God themselves. And I think the reason is obvious enough. Truth is revealed as people can bear it. In the Economy of God there is no casting of pearls before swine, or the giving of that which is holy to the dogs. These strong expressions of our Lord, so often forgotten, are pregnant with meaning in their interpretation of the Divine method of revealing truth, whether in those ancient times or at the present moment. "To him that hath shall be

given" is true of the spiritual life as it is true of the providential government of God, and it should be an incentive to us to realize that the revelation of the Holy Spirit only stops short at our power of receiving it. All that was possible with the ancient people of God, seemingly, was the preservation of the Monotheistic idea. "Hear, O Israel: the Lord thy God is One God." The fulness of time had not yet come when the adorable mystery of plurality of Persons in the Godhead could safely be revealed.

(3) There were no sacraments in the Old Testament dispensation in the proper sense of the term. Sometimes, alas! the great Christian sacraments are reduced by unwise, if sincere, Christians to the level of some bare Jewish rite. They would do well to reflect that as the time then was not ripe for the revelation of the Person of the Holy Ghost or the adorable mystery of the Holy Trinity, so the time was not ripe for that complete union of the material and the spiritual which finds expression by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the Incarnation and in His work in the Church and in the Sacramental system.

The Holy Spirit's message, as we saw in our last chapter, is now by the mercy of God perfectly clear. The fulness of time has come, and the Spiritual now hallows the material, and that hallowing finds its complete manifestation in the

risen and ascended and exalted Body of Jesus at the right hand of God.

(E) But the time has come for the supreme approach of the Holy Spirit. "He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary." The Elect Lady may be regarded as the central point towards which all the energies of the Holy Spirit in nature, in animate nature, and in man are directed. Try as we will to honour her great name, and greet her as the Blessed among women as we may, we can never approach within measurable distance of the honour God has placed upon her. Out of all the myriad women who ever have been or who ever will be, one is selected for the sublime purpose of the Incarnation, and selected not by mere arbitrary choice, but because in her are found qualities contributing to the redemption of mankind. It is the verdict of two of the most ancient fathers, St. Irenæus and St. Justin Martyr, that the obedience and the humility of Mary, the second Eve, untied the knot of the pride and disobedience of the first Eve. So is there evolved by the operation of the Holy Ghost a creature capable of containing within her womb Him Who is perfect God and perfect Man. It is indeed the supreme approach; and it is in the Sacred Humanity of the Christ that the Holy Spirit effects His greatest triumphs. Without measure was He given to Him. There is no limit to the

activities of the Holy Ghost in the Sacred Humanity, just because in that perfection of human nature no obstacle is imposed to the inflow of His grace. In an unique sense our Lord is seen to be under the control of the Holy Ghost. It is by the Spirit He is led into the wilderness, and the control is there expressed by a word which in the original almost suggests the idea of forcible or violent compulsion. He is so closely identified with the work of the Saviour that His presence is to compensate even for the withdrawal from sight of our Lord's visible presence. So completely is the Resurrection Body under the control of the Holy Spirit, that the inbreathing of the Holy Ghost is reserved until that supreme event has taken place. So it is with the Ascended Body. "The Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." By the power of the Holy Ghost the Sacred Humanity is developed up to the utmost limits of perfection on this plane of life. The life which was set free by death in other worlds and on other planes of life was by the same mighty agency developed up to the possibilities of perfection which there obtain ; but it was no incomplete and imperfect Humanity which the Holy Spirit would convey. His richest and most complete approach to poor fallen human nature would not take place until Jesus is glorified. This is the Sacred Humanity to which He unites us in Holy

Baptism. This is the Sacred Humanity He conveys to us in the Holy Eucharist. This is the unspeakable gift He brings to us, so splendid in its heavenly glory that our poor frail nature quails at its greatness, and yet so full of promise for our eternal destiny that we would even dare by the grace of God to taste the Heavenly Manna.

(F) Yet there is one other approach of the Holy Spirit so conspicuous and complete that it has determined the day when we shall offer our homage to the Third Person in the Godhead. It is the approach of the Holy Spirit to the Church which sums up all that we have been saying of the conveyance of the Glorified Humanity. It is the approach at Pentecost. It is the formation of the Spirit-bearing Body, the birthday of the Catholic Church.

Who shall dare to measure what that coming has meant to mankind? The Church is the very citadel of His encampments in the sphere of Humanity. It is the very home and household of the Holy Ghost. Here all that we know of His work in the world at large in life, in mankind, is summed up and centred. Here is His Trysting-place—the abode where His assured Presence may be found. From henceforth no Christian need doubt where to seek His guidance, where to claim His promised help. It is the final avenue of His approach to man, and of man's advance to Him. Within the

Sacred Body He will call and inspire the sacred writers, and by the collective judgment of the same sacred Body, out of the mass of spiritual writings the informing Spirit will finally select and set His hall-mark upon the sacred canon of Holy Scripture. It is indeed to the Holy Spirit within the Church we owe our Bibles. If the same sacred Body is threatened in its most sacred spot where it guards the Central Truth of Revelation—if in the early and later days of the Church's history she has been beset with heresy—it is by the guidance of the Holy Spirit within she emerged untouched. If amid the strain and stress of her early trials the Bride of Christ went on her way weeping, doubtless She who bore the good seed of the Spirit was to come again with joy, bringing her sheaves with her. It is to the action of the Holy Spirit within the Spirit-bearing Body we owe the Catholic Creeds.

All the Treasures of God are stored up within her in boundless profusion. To quit her loving shelter is to wander aimlessly in this life and to jeopardize that of eternity. To ignore her warning voice is to rush in where angels fear to tread. To banish her from Christian life and conduct is to banish the Holy Spirit Himself back again into the natural life; to grieve His Gracious Person; to imperil the status of the Bible, and to cut ourselves from assured Grace.

(G) Here again, before we finish, we shall do well to pause for a moment and notice in a general sense the special characteristics of the Holy Spirit which are part of the Christian Revelation.

(1) The Personality of the Holy Spirit is now abundantly made manifest. It is no question of a formative energy now. He is clearly revealed in the Third Person in the adorable Trinity.

(2) With equal clearness there comes forth the complete hallowing of the material. Matter and Spirit are not to be in abiding antithesis. They are welded into an harmonious whole. What but this can be the meaning of the gracious symbols of the Holy Spirit, the Dove, Fire, Water, Wind, Oil? These are all material things deliberately selected to express Eternal Truth. Nature was always Sacramental *in posse*. Now there is the clear endorsement of the Sacramental principle. Behold, it is all very good. Materia is fused with Spirit, and in that union finds its Eternal Destiny—Sacraments are possible now for the first time.

(3) The covenanted mercies of God are to be found in the Church. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." It is in those assured mercies mankind is to live and thrive and grow unto Eternal Life.

It is a wonderful study, this revelation of the Holy Spirit's approach. As I think of the vast

periods of time wherein His Divine energies have been at work, and the patient forbearance of the gracious Spirit with our poor wayward race, it carries with it a strong incentive to patience with the ways of God and man. The ways of God to us may seem slow. If we look at life whole they are also very sure. Tarry thou the Lord's leisure.

"O Holy Ghost, Almighty God, we adore Thee secretly, lovingly uniting us with our Incarnate Lord through Sacraments, and many secret workings of Thy grace; moving on the waters of Baptism, descending in the sevenfold Gifts of Confirmation, cleansing our guilt away in Absolution, making the consecrated Elements the very Body and Blood of Christ.

Quicken our souls, Blessed Spirit, we beseech Thee, that with fervent love and joy we may meet Jesus as He comes to us. Purify, sanctify, perfect us, enabling us to receive Him to our endless comfort. Thou didst fill His Sacred Humanity with all the Fulness of the Godhead; so prevent, strengthen, and establish us, that we may be able to partake of that same Fulness, ever dying to ourselves, ever rising unto God. Amen." (From the "Short Office of the Holy Ghost.")

IV

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST—WISDOM

BEFORE we consider in detail the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit, it is important that we should carefully observe and study these three preliminary truths.

(1) The gifts in many respects sound so like each other, that not only is there a difficulty in committing them to memory, but there is frequently great confusion of thought as to the specific function of each gift. This confusion of thought is by no means confined to the unlearned. There is a very wide divergence of opinion amongst those whose learning carries great weight as to the specific and relative functions of these great powers which the Holy Ghost gives to mankind in Confirmation. It is not my province to enter into the discussion of this question, even if I had the requisite learning. The object of this little book is to encourage practical devotion to the Holy Spirit, and in expounding the gifts I can only give the conclusion I have

arrived at after careful study. But we may begin by making the gifts more clear by a division. They may very well be divided into three and three, with the majestic and interesting gift of Counsel, balanced between the two sections. The first three gifts of Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge are almost entirely concerned with the inward life of the soul. The last three are almost entirely concerned with the Will—that is, with the active life of the Christian as it is lived out in relation to others. Between these two great sections hangs in balance the gift of Counsel, which has a very distinct relation to both the interior and the exterior life of the devout. Without anticipating what has to be said about this great gift, it may here and now be pointed out that it is the great *social* gift of the Holy Spirit which is concerned with our life as social beings, destined to work out our salvation in relation to others. It will conduce to clear thinking, and therefore to clearness of devotion, if I give a short summary of the lines of definition on which I propose to consider these wonderful powers.

The gift of Wisdom is, roughly speaking, to be regarded as the gift of spiritual insight. Understanding will be treated as entirely concerned with the intellect. Knowledge, widely differing from both of these, will be regarded as in the main concerned with the heart, the knowledge of the love

of God. Counsel, as I stated just now, is concerned with our life as *social beings*. Ghostly Strength braces the will and enables the soul by the power of the Spirit to persevere. True Godliness will be regarded as the gift which secures conformity to the truly godly life of the pattern Man. It is here regarded as only another expression of the *Imitatio Christi*. And Holy Fear we shall regard as the expression of the great basal Christian grace, of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

(2) These sevenfold gifts must be regarded in their relation to the *natural man*. Mr. Illingworth, to whose writings we all owe so much, in the beautiful book on Christian Character, which he has given to the Church, points out with great force that the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity have their counterpart in the life of the natural man. The same, I am convinced, may be said of the sevenfold gifts. Here, in faint and shadowy outlines, may be traced these great gifts of the Spirit, for though in the covenant relationship of the Holy Spirit to mankind there is a richness and a security of grace which cannot be found outside of it, yet His relationship to the natural man is a very real and a very important one.

There are Souls naturally intuitive wherein the gift of Wisdom will find a special welcome.

Others dowered naturally with exceptional powers of intellect will find in the gift of Understanding the hallowing of their minds. Some naturally dowered by the spirit of the Divine Charity will rejoice in special degree, in all that the gift of Knowledge can bring. Others, again, naturally fitted for social service, will derive fresh inspiration from the gift of Counsel.

Others, again, with great capacities in their natural life for the endurance of hardness, will transform this great natural quality into the supernatural grace of Fortitude by the gift of Ghostly Strength. While the naturally pious and the naturally meek will welcome and appreciate in special degree the two great gifts of Godliness and Holy Fear.

Nor is this a question of merely academic interest. While we shall expect to find in all the baptized and confirmed something of each gift, we shall not expect to find all the gifts in equal proportion. Each one of the gifts will be seen in richer profusion as it comes in contact with conditions favourable to its development in the natural man. It is well to recognize this, for the religion of the Incarnation was never intended nor designed to spoil character, nor to create a monotonous sequence of characterless individuals all cast in the same mould. Variety is as much to be expected in the spiritual life

as it is in the natural life. For most of us the lines of our Vocation are lines that can be traced in our natural disposition, so far as it is not sinful. By the power of the Holy Ghost we may do great things for God if we will realize, utilize, and consecrate the particular trend of our natural disposition. This will become more obvious as we proceed; but it is worth while to point it out at this stage.

(3) And as the corrective to this last thought, it is important to remember that, while fully recognizing the relation of the natural man to the gifts, the gifts themselves are in their richness and power *objectively bestowed.* The great strength of the Catholic system will be found on its objective side. With the baptized and confirmed there is no question of the presence of the gifts. The appointed sign *conveys* the appointed gift. It is as sure and certain as that Apostolic hands were laid upon us. Alas! it is in our power to quench the Spirit, as it is in our power to grieve that Generous Friend; but no less is it in our power, as it was in the power of St. Timothy, to stir up into flame the gift which is in us by the laying-on of hands.

These gifts of the Holy Ghost may be unfolded in many ways. I prefer to follow a plan which I have found useful in retreats. I shall ask three very simple questions: (A) Where are these gifts

to be traced in the life of Christ? (B) Where shall we find them in the life of the Spirit-bearing Body, the Church? (C) Where shall we find them in practical relation to our own spiritual life?

(A) The Gift of Wisdom—what is it? It has been defined as "a certain Divine light given to the soul whereby it both sees and tastes God and Divine things." It is the power of spiritual insight. There is something in it of the intuitive, and its most characteristic expression is all that is implied by the simple term—faith.

It is written that the Spirit was given "without measure"—that is, without limit to the Christ. With Him there was no limit to the inflow of the Holy Spirit's grace, because in the perfect Humanity no obstacle was imposed. Hence we may rightly look for conspicuous manifestations of the sevenfold gifts in the life of our Blessed Lord. It is very specially the case with this the first of the Holy Spirit's gifts.

(1) It is trenching upon very sacred ground, upon that mysterious point of contact between the Godhead and the Manhood at which reverence bids us pause and take our shoes from off our feet, for the ground on which we stand is holy. We can but stand with bowed head in adoring worship, and sternly forbid the intrusion of human curiosity; but we cannot pass by altogether the sublime truth that our Blessed Lord is the

Heavenly Wisdom personified. Whether the human term which St. John selects to describe eternal realities—the Logos or the Word—is exclusively Jewish in its derivation, or whether it owes anything to Greek influence, is not a question which I feel competent to discuss. That it is largely Jewish in origin would, I think, be admitted by most scholars. In the eighth chapter of the Book of Proverbs it is expressed with the greatest elaboration, and there the suggestion of personality is equally clear.

"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. I was by Him, as a master-workman, I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; Rejoicing in His habitable earth; and my delight was with the sons of men." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made. That which hath been made was life in Him; and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us."

The question of the relationship of the Godhead to the Manhood in the Christ must always and ultimately run up into a point where mystery reigns supreme, and where, as I have said, we can but reverently pause and adore our Incarnate

God, and humbly admit the limitations of the human mind; but it is impossible to pass by altogether unnoticed the sublime truth of the personification of the Heavenly Wisdom, and therefore the unique exhibition of this Divine gift which we should *expect* to find, and which we *do* find, in the Christ.

(2) I gladly turn from this great mystery to a line of thought which is not complicated by so great a question. This gift of Wisdom will most clearly be traced in our Lord's wonderful gift of intuitive knowledge. "Whence hath this man letters?" How came it that a peasant Carpenter in one of the most obscure portions of one of the most obscure provinces of the Roman Empire produced the most wonderful religion the world has ever seen? The charge, if it is true, which is sometimes made of want of originality in His religion and morality only intensifies the wonder. Let us admit, if you will, that He has incorporated into His religion much that is good and true in other religions. I for one am not in the least concerned to deny it. I thankfully believe that the one truth may have been revealed partially and in broken lights to the best of the non-Christian religions as it was to the chosen people. But all this only strengthens our realization of His possession in unique degree of this gift of the Spirit.

To have drawn together the best thought, the best morality, from all the religions of the earth, to have superadded to this a perfectly unique religious contribution of His own, to have combined all this into the most perfect mosaic, and then to have embodied it all in the daring scheme of an universal kingdom called His Church—a kingdom which has lasted for two thousand years —ay, and will last for ever — is the most conspicuous example we can produce as the work of One who was indeed dowered with Heavenly Wisdom.

(3) But we turn from this example to one last illustration from the life of the Christ. Look for a moment at our Blessed Lord's life of devotion. The life of faith in God which, as we have seen, is the most characteristic feature of this wonderful gift, will always manifest itself in the devotional life. Those long nights spent alone with the Father in prayer — those appeals in the great crises of His life, or before some great miracle, or before His selection of the Twelve—that supplication with strong crying and agony in Gethsemane; that matchless prayer for unity; that touching reliance on the Father at the beginning and at the end of His cruel agony on the Cross—what were all these manifestations of the life of prayer but expressions of that gift of the Heavenly Wisdom which knows that the appeal to the Eternal

creates the only force which can carry us through the days of crises and the dark moments of life. It shames us when we reflect upon our neglect of the sacred writings, so much richer and more beautiful for us than they could be for Him, when we call to mind His devotion to that half-Bible of His time and His unique knowledge of the Scriptures. What a revelation of devotion to the Eternal Father and of indignation at the dishonour done to His House is that picture of the gentle Christ, with eyes filled with indignation and with the scourge of small cords in His hand, driving out those who profaned the Temple of the Most High !

(B) The gift is seen in hardly less conspicuous degree in the Spirit-bearing Body of Christ, the Church Catholic.

(1) In the twelfth chapter of the Revelation of St. John we have a picture of the fortunes of the Church as the extension of the Incarnation. This in the main is the meaning of the chapter, though far from being so in any exclusive sense. In my humble judgment, beyond a doubt the first interpretation is that of the Blessed Mother and her Divine Child, and the troublous years of His early Childhood. But the picture rapidly passes into another. It is a picture in miniature of the long warfare between the Church and the world: "And to the woman were given two wings of a

great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place where she is nourished."

In the darkest moments of stress and strain the Catholic Church has known where to betake herself for strength to prevail. The gift of Heavenly Wisdom has enabled her to rise into the very presence of Her Creator, and to claim that support and promised help to prevail against the Gates of Hell which have never been refused. It may indeed be said that in the possession of this gift there resides her indestructibility. When we turn from this microcosm of her history to the reality, what a picture it is of perpetual conflict, of seeming defeat, of restored strength, of continued victory! She "endured as seeing Him Who is invisible."

This wonderful power of spiritual insight springs directly from the gift of Wisdom. Hardly had she emerged from the hand of her Creator than she was beset with division and trouble from within and with attack from without. With marvellous skill she threads her way amid the mazes of heresy. Then she is matched with the world-power, and is locked in a life-and-death struggle with the forces of Imperial Rome. Instinct with the Holy Spirit, she emerges triumphant. But, in accordance with her Lord's predictions there is never to be peace. The forces opposed to her do but change their shape. Beneath the form and features of those potent adversaries of the infant

Church, the world-power and irreligious religion, the first and second beast of the Apocalypse, St. John discerned the dread figure of the arch-enemy of mankind. So it has always been.

We can trace it all back in the pages of her wonderful story. Now it is the great schism between East and West. Now it is corruption within the Body, the appalling revelation of the Harlot Church, the apostate Bride. Now it is the rise of the Mohammedan power. Again, it is from within that the danger comes, in the rise of a new learning divorced from piety. Then it is in the Spirit of an unbalanced individualism which marred the unity of her corporate life. It is not necessary to carry our minds to times nearer to our own. The devout study of Church history is the surest corrective to all pessimistic views as to present-day troubles. There is a deathless principle within the Spirit-bearing Body. She is always able to renew her strength at the sources of Divine Grace, always able to endure "as seeing Him Who is invisible." There have been times in her long history when it seemed certain that the ship of the Church must go down; times compared with which the difficulties and dangers which surround us now are mere child's play. The Church never has failed and she never can fail, because the Divine Spirit is within her, and the Divine promise standeth sure.

(2) It would not be right to refrain from calling attention to the exercise of this great gift in the Church in her relation to the unseen world. She has her own well approved devotions which express the great doctrine of the Communion of the Saints. Within the veil holy hands are lifted up in intercession on our behalf, and we too may pray that the Divine peace, light, and refreshment may rest upon all the faithful departed. These ideas express devotions which have been hallowed by usage in the Church for hundreds of years. But how marked has always been her attitude, both in the old dispensation and the new, towards all dabbling in the occult. It is not that she questions the residuum of truth and fact there may be in all spiritualistic phenomena. She knows far too well how completely is our life environed by spiritual forces. Armed with this great gift of the Heavenly Wisdom, she can discern beyond the veil that there are forces of good as well as forces of evil. Should her children tamper, under conditions which she has not sanctioned, with the spiritual forces around, she knows that he who can transform himself into an angel of light, who could deceive, if it were possible, the very elect, may lead them into unhallowed relationship with the forces of spiritual evil. So she sets her ban against all such intercourse. The decay of faith has ever been coextensive with the rise of superstition. I do not

say our own century is conspicuous beyond other ages for signs of a decay in religious faith and practice. But I do say that, in so far as what decay there is, is marked by a revival of superstition, it is folly, and worse than folly, on the part of the children of the Church, not to listen to the loving warnings which by virtue of this gift our Church has ever addressed to her children.

(3) But the greatest evidence for her possession of this gift will be found in the lives of the saints. It was by virtue of this great gift that the Heroes of Faith came into existence to gladden the hearts of all God's people by their life and example. By this gift they pierced through "the mists and films which hide eternal things from mortal eyes," and saw the great realities of God, the Soul, and Eternity.

By virtue of this power within they knew they were but strangers and pilgrims here below. By it they were impelled to seek for that City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. It is thus we get in the saints that quality which can only be described as "heavenly-mindedness." They lived and died and worked and gladdened with sweet humour and tender service the lives of others, but all the time their lives were hid with Christ in God.

When we think of the long roll-call of the saints of God, what a vision of spiritual beauty it

brings before us, and how completely it illustrates St. Paul's direction that the Christian is to think on "whatsoever things are lovely."

There are those on whose very faces may be traced the peace of God, whose features are radiant with an unearthly beauty, whose very presence diffuses spiritual fragrance wherever they are. It is not difficult to discover their secret. The power of the Holy Ghost and the gift of Wisdom have given them a little glimpse of the glories of the Eternal World, and that vision has preserved them untouched amid the manifold temptations of the world, the flesh, and the Devil.

(C) There is still a third question to be asked. Where shall we trace this gift of the Heavenly Wisdom in practical relation to our own spiritual life? This beautiful gift of God can be traced in so many departments of the spiritual life that it is difficult to decide where to begin and what to exclude.

(1) The Holy Spirit will teach us by this gift the true relations of Time and Eternity. We may rely upon His guidance in this perhaps the most difficult department of the spiritual life, though it is not possible to lay down definite rules.

We are called, most of us, to live in the world, to do our duty in what is called our secular life, to engage in the active duties of life, and, it may be, to dutifully enter in some degree into its life of

pleasure, so far as that pleasure is in essence innocent. And yet God must come first. With Him it is that or nothing. He will never come second. There is the call to prayer, to meditation, to Sacrament, to all that in the devout life implies that we are eternal beings who have come from God and are going back to Him.

It is a difficult relation, and sometimes the progress of the Christian has been along a razor-like edge, with the precipice of unbelief on one side and that of an unbalanced religious mind on the other. But short of this extreme condition such is the attraction of the things of time and sense, and so far off seem the eternal things, that were it not for this gracious gift of the Spirit the best of us would drift on to a lower and a more material plane of spiritual existence. By it the Holy Spirit will enable us to be devout without being fanatical, wholehearted in our allegiance to God and not neglectful of earthly ties; resolutely set on doing the duty which lies to hand in this life, and not unmindful that its glories pass away, that death is great gain, that the Heavenly Vision is alone the one thing needful.

(2) To realize all that this gift means is to cure all murmuring and discontent, for by this agency the Holy Spirit will teach us the Divine ordering of our environment. It is simply an unthinkable proposition that the Creator could place any

eternal soul in such material environment, that the chances would be a thousand to one against its attainment to perfection. Yet, to the best of us, does it not look so at times? Nay, have there not come moments in the lives of many of us when, in an agony of despair, we have been tempted to cry out that all things are against us, that God cares not if we perish, and that it is impossible to make any headway against the cruel circumstances of our environment?

And there are some to whom the Divine call to trouble and anxiety comes with startling and overwhelming frequency. Hardly do they emerge from the overwhelming strain of one anxiety than another more crushing is upon them. Side by side with this they see others living lives of ease and freedom from trial, which fill them with bitter envy, loud complaints, and surging discontent with the providential government of the world. There is but one remedy for such a dangerous spiritual condition. The power of the Holy Ghost, the gift of Wisdom alone can help them. "For consider, my brethren," says St. James, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers trials." Joy? How impossible and unreal it sounds! The utmost we could ever attain to was submission to the inscrutable Will of God in the uneven distribution of the discipline of pain—mental, spiritual, or bodily. And the apostle here speaks of counting it all joy

when trials come. But he soon makes his meaning clear. "Knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Ah, yes, if we could but see this it would all look very different. The end God has in view is Christian perfection for each soul, and environment in trial is directed to this single end. It is all well worth having; it is even possible to think of trials with joy if we could but be assured of this. But, alas! we are groping in the dark, and we slip back to the old hypothesis that if there be a God He acts towards us with manifest injustice in sending us trials so grievous while others are exempt. It is just at this point that St. James steps in with quite marvellous intuition into the spiritual life. "If any man lack *wisdom*, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; *and it shall be given him.*" Wisdom! This gift of the Spirit is the only remedy, for by it the soul can discern God's loving purpose in the bitterest trial, and can wait in patience, can watch for His loving mercies, and can hope with serene confidence.

(3) I do not think it can be questioned that it is mainly through this gift the soul comes into spiritual relation with its Lord and Master. The interior and mystic relation of the soul to its Divine Lord and Master is so sacred a matter that

any allusion to it almost seems a breach of confidence. Yet there are those who have tasted of the graciousness of His presence, and who in mystic communion with Him have seen in dim and shadowy outline the King in His beauty, have realized something of that land which now seems so far away, and have heard His loving voice. These experiences are as real as any other experiences in human life, and deserve our serious attention. They do not come frequently, and it would not be good that they should do so. But when they do come, it is through the action of the Holy Ghost, through this mysterious gift of the Heavenly Wisdom. He can and He does so lead whomsoever He wills into these heights of the spiritual life. If such blessedness is to come to the soul, it will come from an ever-deepening devotion to the Holy Ghost.

(4) It is through this gift the Holy Spirit guides us, both in difficult moments of our own and in our relation to others when they claim our guidance. The true conditions under which spiritual guidance is granted by God are not so much those which spring from vehement and earnest petitions offered to God in the critical moment of stress or difficulty, as from the life of abiding union with the Holy Spirit in association with this particular gift. That He does bestow the most wonderful help in moments of the greatest

difficulty, when the soul is perplexed beyond words as to what to do or what to advise, is the experience of all who look to His gracious leading, and the surest way of obtaining that help is to stir up into flame this gift of the Heavenly Wisdom.

"Blessed Spirit, Almighty God, Thyself the Gift and yet the Giver of all gifts, enrich us Thy servants with ever renewed inflowings of the Spirit of Wisdom, that we may know the source and end of all creatures, and the purpose of their creation. Teach us the true value of all the works of God, in nature, in grace, in glory, that we rising above what is seen and temporal, through the power of Thy grace, may attain to the full possession of what is Unseen and Eternal.

Infuse into our hearts a pure love for all that is holy and heavenly, that by faith ever seeing the Invisible, we may live in its power, and be satisfied with the blessed hope of the Eternal Beatitude for which we look and long: through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen." (From the "Short Office of the Holy Ghost.")

V

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST—UNDERSTANDING

THE gift of Spiritual Understanding has been defined as follows: "It is a supernatural habit, or quality, or faculty abiding in the intellect, whereby it is elevated, and enabled, first, to understand supernatural truth with special clearness, and, next, to penetrate into the reasons and motives of faith; and, lastly, to exhibit and to prevail on others by the exhibition of the truth to believe in the same."

It is the glory of the Incarnation that it touches, hallows, and elevates all essentials of our complex being. So the human intellect finds itself in, and is braced and uplifted by, our holy religion to the highest perfection. The means whereby the mind of the natural man is thus glorified is this wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit called Spiritual Understanding. Perhaps more than all the other gifts it will be seen to exist in very varied degree, because in this quality of intel-

lectual power there is the greatest diversity in the natural man.

(A) Bearing in mind the great central truth of the special relationship of the Holy Spirit to our Lord's Sacred Humanity, that the Holy Ghost was given to Him without measure, let us search for examples of this great gift in the Christ. We shall not have far to seek:

(1) "And all that heard Him were astonished at His *understanding* and answers." It is not without the deepest significance that this gift is amongst the first of the gifts which the Sacred Humanity exhibits so far as the sacred record is concerned. We must not misunderstand the meaning of this wonderful exhibition of Spiritual Understanding in the Christ of twelve years old. In Italy and elsewhere we sometimes come across pictures which, too much after the fashion of the pseudo-Gospels, present us with a picture of our Lord as a kind of monstrous boy-prodigy instead of the simple Gospel picture of an amazingly clever boy who attracted attention by His unusual learning.

I have before my mind's eye now the picture of the boy-Christ, standing on a platform and exhorting the group of aged teachers around Him, somewhat after the fashion of those precocious boy-preachers we occasionally hear of in our own day among our Nonconformist friends. Our

Lord, in thus exhibiting the spirit of truest learning, is really in the position of pupil and not of teacher, of one who in the perfection of His Humanity did not disdain to go through the stages of painful and laborious acquisition of knowledge which is the common lot of mankind. He increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man, and the incident does witness to an exceptional aptitude for learning, and therefore to an exceptional exhibition of this great gift of the Holy Ghost at that early period of His life.

(2) The gift may be traced no less clearly in our Lord's extraordinary insight into the inner meaning of the world of nature. In the truest and most literal sense of the term, He was the greatest *Seer* the world has ever known. With piercing insight He discerned (what so many of us whose eyes are blinded cannot see), that external phenomena are sacramental, and that the eternal and the spiritual are ever pressing on and piercing through the temporal and the material.

To those who have eyes to see "every bush is a-flame," and the simplest things in life are instinct with heavenly meaning. Those who possess this precious faculty have something of the poet-mind. Our Blessed Lord had it in supereminent degree. Nothing seems to escape His notice; everything is stored up for parabolic use. The farm hand, ploughing, harrowing, and sowing—

the management of an estate, the flowers of the field, the birds of the air, the sweeping of the dust in the house, commerce, the courts of justice—all these and many other illustrations which will at once suggest themselves, witness to the unique power of His Spiritual Understanding.

(3) But it may no less clearly be traced in that to which the last quality is so closely allied, I mean in His unique power as a teacher. It is one thing to acquire knowledge; it is quite another to have the gift of imparting that knowledge to others. A close study of the Gospels reveals our Lord to us as the Prince of Teachers. His methods are, to this day, the most approved methods of imparting knowledge. He not only thought for the Apostles, but he trained them to think. He not only helped them in their education, but He refrained from helping them to their detriment. He not only conveyed truth to them, but He conveyed it in such a way that it became part of them. He not only taught them to look to Him in all things, but He so educated them in that elementary act of the Christian life that they could stand ultimately as grown men and not babes. He taught them at once to be dependent and to be independent. It is the perfection of education, the teacher in his rightful place, and the taught helped sufficiently for their own welfare but no more. Doubtless it was due to the gift of Understanding.

Assuredly the exercise of this gift did not cease with the earthly life. In the exalted Christ there is still this gift. The education of the Apostolic College is but a microcosm of the education of the world, of the generation, of the nation, of the family, of the individual. Each life is under the tender care and guidance of Him Who said the very hairs of our head are all numbered. All the circumstances of our life, if we could but see them, are under the control of the great Teacher or Humanity, and are all subordinated to one single end. In Thy will is our peace. It is only in realization of this sublime truth that we can cast all our care upon Him, knowing that He careth for us.

(4) Before we pass on to a consideration of this great gift as it is revealed to us in the life of the Church, it is impossible to ignore one whole department of the Holy Spirit's relation to the Christ in this particular, which is not only profoundly true in itself, but most deeply helpful to the spiritual life. "He knew what was in man." Our Lord's understanding of human nature was quite unique. It is not to be questioned that this understanding took in the dark side, alas! as well as the good. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous" indeed, but also "the countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil."

But while we may not select the comforting

truths of religion and ignore its austere side, it is surely true to say that there is a revelation of the tender sympathy of Jesus in the Gospel which far out-balances the stern and necessary revelation of the Eternal Saviour-Judge.

As the long ages of the empire of Jesus have passed by, and generation after generation of mankind has come in contact with their Saviour, their God, and their King, how many could arise and say that in the darkest moments of their life, when they have been misrepresented and misunderstood, when in some cases they have passed into Eternity with their good name unvindicated, it has been sufficient, and more than sufficient, for them to know that Jesus knew and Jesus understood? The verdict of mankind mattered not in view of His final and understanding judgment upon the circumstances of the life as a whole.

"We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge. We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood. O Lord, in Thee have I trusted, I shall never be confounded."

(B) We trace the same gift in the Spirit-bearing Body, the Church. Her long history is full of illustrations of the exercise of this power within her.

(1) Trace it first in her relation to the Holy Scriptures. Churchmen are severely blamed

because they will not come into line with the modern undenominational spirit as to the value of what is called "simple Bible teaching." The firm stand they have taken upon this question, and which they will continue to take because it touches fundamentals, is in the last analysis in the interest of the Sacred Book itself. In its rightful setting, in relation to the witnessing and interpreting Church, the Holy Scriptures are safe. Apart from that setting, in our judgment their position is precarious in the extreme. It is not merely a question of the Holy Spirit selecting men of old to write under His inspiring influence. It is much more than that. It is a question of the informing Spirit in the Body selecting out of a great mass of ancient literature of very varied quality and value, that which is permanently secured in the Canon for the edification of Christians in all ages. It is more even than that. It is a question of the informing Spirit interpreting those sacred writings amid diversity of opinions as to their meaning. But the first position alone can be considered here. If this position be true, and certainly we are learning day by day the priceless value of the witness of the early Church in this relation, then "no Church" ultimately means "no Bible"; at any rate no Bible with the stamp of authority upon it. The Holy Spirit's gift of Understanding in the Church secures to us the only basis on

which the Bible as authorized Scripture can possibly stand.

(2) In all ages the Holy Spirit, by virtue of this gift, has raised up men wise in the understanding of the Holy Scriptures; men who have learnt that this is the Book of books; that a lifetime is too little to sacrifice in its service. The literature which is concerned with the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures is simply prodigious in its vastness. Of course, also, it is of very varying value, and that which is valuable to the time-spirit of one generation, may not be valuable in the Providence of God to the time-spirit of another generation. But, with due allowance for all legitimate limitation upon the value of the gift, what Christian is there who does not heartily thank God for the Holy Spirit's gift of spiritual Understanding as it is exhibited in the great commentators, both ancient and modern? The present writer, by training and conviction, would always pay the greatest deference to the interpretation of the earliest of the Fathers; but he is also one of those who recognize the value of this gift of the Holy Spirit in the reverent and restrained criticism of to-day. Where there is the single aim to find out the truth as distinct from a captious rejection of the orthodox standpoint for its own sake, he would thankfully hope and believe that the Holy Spirit by virtue of this gift will

bring great good to the Holy Scripture even out of the extreme and unbalanced work of the more extravagant school of critics.

But it is in the field of spiritual interpretation that we shall seek most surely for the Holy Spirit's presence, not so much in the writings of those who seldom seem to see the beauty of the thing they are dissecting. If, on the one hand, there never was a time when the Holy Scriptures were subjected to a more severe criticism, on the other hand there never was a time when through the work of modern commentators its spiritual beauty was made more manifest.

(3) In these anti-dogmatic days it is, perhaps, venturesome to point to the great theologians of the Church as evidence of the gifts within the Body; but Theology is the queen of the sciences, and learning is as necessary to vital religion as to any other science. To some is given by the same Spirit power of accurate expression; to some by the same Spirit power of convincing presentation of truth; to some, power of insight into dogmatic truth; to some, the humbler power of making the learning of others plain to the plain man. But all these varied gifts come from one and the selfsame Spirit, Who divides to every man severally as He wills by virtue of this great gift. By means of it He dowered the Church in her need with the gigantic and consecrated intellect of a St. Thomas

Aquinas. In the days of the greatest stress of the Church's conflict with Puritan errors, He provided her with a great champion like the judicious Hooker or the learned Pearson. In days when the very foundations of revealed religion were threatened by a very subtle and very highly-cultured Theism, He sends forth a mighty intellectual warrior like Bishop Butler; and were it seemly to quote modern names, we should see that whenever there is the need of specially equipped champions of the faith in the intellectual sphere, the Holy Spirit never fails to produce them.

To many in the present period of transition in religious thought, when in so many matters in religion and out of religion we seem to be drifting from the old moorings, the outlook appears very dark and the clouds seem to have no silver lining. Yet there have been periods when the outlook has been darker still, and when the onslaught upon the faith has seemed almost overwhelming. It is at once the glory of the religion of the Incarnation, and one of the surest proofs of its Divine origin that when the conflict is over, the one true and absolute religion is seen standing out stronger than ever, having absorbed all that was good and true in the hostile forces which threatened destruction. It always has been so and it always will be so, for the same Blessed Spirit of God is with His Church still, and by

virtue of the gift of Understanding can always produce from her treasury things new and old, and ever adequate to the occasion.

(4) There is no gratitude in politics, and perhaps we are foolish to expect it, yet even the greatest opportunists amongst statesmen might sometimes pause ere they strike another blow at the venerable Church of God in this land. By virtue of this gift of Understanding the Church was up and doing in the matter of secular education when the rest of the nation was asleep, even those who would now fain persuade the English people that they and they alone are the real friends of education. The ancient universities are a wonderful and very tangible evidence of the presence of this gift in the ancient Church of England. There is nothing in Europe to be compared with Oxford and Cambridge, those beautiful seats of learning. The faithful servants of God, most of them ecclesiastics, grudged nothing in their munificent gifts to the cause of education. In later years, it was the Church of God in this land which first provided the means of education for the poor, and then educated the English race to its national duty in this relation. The Church of England must not look for gratitude, and, indeed, she seeks for her reward elsewhere than in the sordid sphere of party politics; but the English nation might well pause to think of the exhibition of this

wonderful gift of the Holy Ghost in the sphere of education in the Church of England, and ere they listen to the specious misrepresentations of her opponents, reflect upon the limitless obligations they are under to the only true representative of the ancient *Ecclesia Anglicana.*

(C) This gift of all the gifts has the most practical relation to our spiritual life in its relation to the special difficulties of our age.

(1) In it resides the secret of the harmonizing of Reason and Revelation. No reading is more sad than that of the long record in the past century of the struggle between the champions of religion and the leaders of the world of science. It is pitiable to trace the fierce and unnecessary struggle over disputed territory, and the gradual retreat, inch by inch, of the orthodox from untenable positions. It is too often a record on the one hand of ungenerous suspicion and of faithless dread of the accepted conclusions of science as destructive of religion, and on the other of bitter resentment and sarcastic contempt at the supposed obstructive tactics of adversaries conscious of defeat. It is sad reading, sad in itself, and sad because the conflict need never have arisen, and never would have arisen had we been more conscious of the presence of this most precious gift, and more concerned to stir it up.

The Holy Spirit by this gift will teach us to

follow a better, a truer, and a more generous line of action. He will help us to *wait* in patience for the reconciliation of seemingly hopeless antagonisms. He will show us that religion has everything to hope for, and nothing to fear in, accepted scientific conclusions. Above all, He will enable us to see that both Reason and Revelation come from the same Giver of all good gifts; that the one is the complement of the other; that they are the truest of friends; that the God of Nature is the God of Grace; and that what God hath joined together man must not put asunder.

(2) No less certainly will He enable us by stirring up this gift to understand what our Holy Religion really is, and by understanding it to remove most of the difficulties of the day. It cannot be questioned that certain difficulties peculiar to our time at present seem insoluble, and that the wisest course for the Christian is frankly to say that he does not know the answer. But emphatically it is not so with the vast proportion of religious difficulties. More often than not the difficulty arises from misunderstanding.

There is all the difference in the world between the essence of Christianity and particular expressions of it. Frequently the doubt which has tortured the doubter is not a doubt at all about Christianity, but about some, perhaps, not unnatural travesty of it. With the statement of the

Truth, the difficulty goes; but it is only by patient reliance upon the guidance of the Holy Ghost that the Truth can be arrived at. The guidance of the Holy Spirit will only come to those who will try to help themselves. No supernatural light will be given which can take the place of a reasoned faith, that can be attained by hard mental work. Indolence in the Christian will never be condoned. These are days when the leisured classes should feel the deepest need of a sense of responsibility for that leisure. If in the providence of God there is release from the stern necessity of earning the daily bread, that leisure is given not for pleasure or idleness, but that the energies might be directed to other work, and so the whole Body of Christ be benefited. Even for others whose lives are strenuous, time and leisure must be found for the cultivation of the spiritual life. Sunday leisure is still the precious possession of the vast proportion of the English people, and it should be used to the full.

By the aid of this precious gift in study and earnest prayer, let us inform ourselves of the truth of our Holy Religion. Let us ground ourselves securely in the history and impregnable position of our own Church. Above all, let us apply ourselves to a realization of the great fact that if Religion is above Reason, it is not contrary to it. We are bidden to give a reason for

the hope that is in us. It is only when, with sincerity and serious study, we apply ourselves to the problem, that we shall find not only how unspeakably comforting are all the truths of Revelation to the soul, but how intrinsically reasonable they are when rightly understood.

(3) Once more, let us realize that by this gift we shall learn to get rid of the abuses of religion. *Corruptio optimi pessima;* the corruption of the best thing is the very worst form of corruption. It is profoundly true of most things, but it is pre-eminently true of religion, and it is specially true of the Christian religion. From one point of view the corruptions of Christianity have their consoling side, for assuredly it is one of the clearest proofs of the Divine origin of the Faith that it has survived abuses which cannot be paralleled in the history of any other religion. At times its abuses have been subversive of its elementary and essential principles. There have been dark periods in the life of Christendom when even the central doctrine of the Fatherhood of God has been forgotten, and when external religion and depraved morality have been in sad and shameless alliance. Credulity and superstition are, alas! not only and always to be found outside the pure religion of Christ our Master.

It is by the gift of Understanding, and by it alone, that all this hideous superstructure can be

overthrown. Spiritual Understanding is the mortal foe of religious superstition. The two can never coexist side by side—

As a bright flame, and like unto the wind
Come from the heights of Heavens, O God the Holy Ghost,
Touch Thou my tongue, guide Thou my feeble pen,
Make my heart strong now when I need Thee most.
Help me to write of Thee, teach me to speak of Thee
Let me lead souls to Thee, O God the Holy Ghost. Amen.

"Blessed Spirit, Lord of Light, increase in our souls, we beseech Thee, the Spirit of Understanding; raise and illuminate our faculties to apprehend the Divine Nature and its operations, that our hearts being enlarged, as the Mystery of the Adorable Trinity unfolds to our view, we may love even as we have been loved. Reveal day by day to us, O Lord, this knowledge, for which alone we thirst, teaching us all that Thy Love demands, and the ways in which Thou wilt be glorified, that casting away all that hinders us, we may be knit eternally to Thee, and finally be made partakers of Thy Beatitude. Amen." (From the "Short Office of the Holy Ghost.")

VI

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST—KNOWLEDGE

IT is impossible to improve upon the Pauline definition of the gift of Knowledge. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying 'Abba, Father.'" Wisdom, understanding, knowledge—these three gifts all sound very similar; yet in reality each gift deals with a totally distinct department of the interior life of the soul. "This is life eternal, that they may *know* Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent," is only another Scriptural expression of the same gift. It is this power of the Holy Spirit within which enables the soul to realize, to rejoice in, and to rest content in, the central truth of Christianity, the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God.

We are so familiar with the thought of the Fatherhood of God, and familiarity has so blinded our eyes to its majesty, that it will be well to pause for a moment and see if we can realize something

of what our life would be without the true knowledge of God. Nothing is more pathetic in human life than the record of its search for God. One by one it arrived at its knowledge of most of the Divine attributes. Power clearly came first—power in the whirling storm, in the quaking earth, in the surging sea, in the rolling thunder, and in the blinding flash of lightning—power overwhelming and pitiless, before which man stood in helpless amazement and terror. Then perhaps came the revelation of order—order not without its puzzling and capricious exceptions—but order manifest in the sequence of the seasons, in the constant round of cause and effect. Wisdom, and, in the main, righteousness came next—wisdom clearly to be traced in natural design, and in the human mind, and righteousness no less clearly in the certain penalty for transgression both in the individual and in the race, and in the certain reward of well doing. Then, though with limitations, the conception of beauty, and the strange union there is between the beautiful and the true. Then from within, from the realization of his own personality, the great inference, so valid still that too much stress can never be laid upon it, that there must be something of that which we call personality in the great first cause. The natural man may indeed learn much of God, but the pathetic question which has always been

trembling on the lips of mankind ever remained unanswered till the Incarnation. *Does He care?* Is He a supreme Being reigning far away from His human children, alike indifferent to their pleasures and their pains? Is there any *love* in the Godhead? Is He a Father? It is true man might have inferred from the presence of love within and the thousand ties which bind him to his fellows, that this his greatest gift could only have come from One who loved. But, in the first place, the conception we have of the power of human love after two thousand years of Christian teaching must not be ascribed to the human race as it existed before that era; and, in the second place, it may well be doubted whether, in view of other qualities within, the great inference could have been clearly drawn had not the Incarnation first suggested the great truth.

Then out of Zion did God appear in perfect beauty. The God-Man not only reveals to us the perfect model, the ideal of human life, but He settles the great question for all time as to the love of the Creator, in these words which should be written in letters of gold upon every perplexed and doubting heart: "*He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*" The Incarnation is the guarantee of the love of God, and the Cross is the revelation of how much He loved. The doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and its logical

sequence, the doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man, now stand impregnable. It is the work of the Holy Spirit by the gift of Knowledge to bring home the realization of this to every soul. The Spirit from within crieth, "Abba, Father."

(A) But we cannot do better than follow our usual line of exposition of the gifts, and seek for evidence of each gift in the life of Him to whom the Holy Spirit was given without measure.

(1) Side by side with the gift of Understanding it stands pre-eminent as amongst the first of the gifts to be manifested as far as the Sacred Record tells us. "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" is the calm, the surprised answer of the boy of twelve years of age to His mother's anxious inquiry. Even then the call of the Father was upon Him. His life's mission had already begun. The Spirit from within the Sacred Humanity was crying, "Abba, Father." To His mother it must have been a premonition of the Cross, where in all its fulness, He was to glorify His Father's name—the first entrance of that sword which should pierce through her loving heart.

(2) It has been well said that every religion has its master-thought, which if once grasped will explain its meaning even in its most remote development. Thus the master-thought of the religion of Mohammed is the *Power* of God. Allah is great,

and Mohammed is His prophet, and wherever you study that great religion, either in itself, or in its practical effect upon the lives of its votaries, you find this master-thought the key which unlocks its mysteries. A glance at any concordance soon reveals to us the master-thought of Christianity. It is the chief thought of that which is the central expression of all Christian Truth—the Sermon on the Mount, and it is best traced out there. We are to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them which despitefully use us, that we may be the children of our Father Which is in Heaven, that we may be perfect even as our Father Which is in Heaven. Almsgiving and fasting and prayer are to be in secret, because the Father seeth in secret. The Pattern Prayer begins with the invocation of the Father's name. The duty of forgiveness is pointed by the stern reminder that the Father has no pardon for the obdurate. The ordinary worries and cares of life as to food and raiment, and all gloomy anticipation of future anxieties are to be banished from the life of the Christian, because the loving Providence of the Heavenly Father may be absolutely trusted. The Kingdom of God is not in word, but in deed. He only is accepted who doeth the will of the Father.

It is the master-thought of His teaching. No less clearly is it the master-thought of His life.

It is only the infinite pity of God which is adequate to the infinite pathos of human life. The power of God is most chiefly seen in showing mercy and pity, and if we would read aright the true character of Him Whose we are and Whom we serve, we shall trace it in the tender love of Jesus for the sick and suffering, in the courageous intimacy of Jesus with the outcast and the sinful, in the gracious and loving visits of Jesus to the sorrowful in their affliction. He has taught us that to be truly Godlike is to be full of mercy and pity, that we never show the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God so effectively as when, like the Eternal Son of God, we enter into the joys and sorrows of poor humanity. The Holy Spirit's gift of Knowledge leads us to the very core and centre of the religion of the Incarnation. It is the master-thought, and as with all other religions the master-thought is the key to all other developments, so it is with Christianity. This gift of the Holy Spirit will remove most of our religious difficulties. Whatever be the theory of the doctrine of the Atonement, the Holy Spirit will teach us to reject any and every view which infringes this sublime and central truth. Whatever may be the meaning of the doctrine of eternal punishment (and I, for one, am convinced that in some sense the Christian is absolutely committed to the doctrine), any interpretation which infringes

this, the central truth, may safely be discarded. The Fatherhood of God is the central doctrine of the Faith. The gift of Knowledge will teach the reconciliation of that doctrine with other truth which may appear to conflict with it.

(B) Let us turn to the manifestation of this gift in the life of the Church.

(1) The duty of perpetuating the truth is not the only duty of the Church. She is something much more than an admirably adapted machine for conveying the religion of the Incarnation to mankind until the day of the restitution of all things. The idea of the Church is part of the Truth itself. Nevertheless, one main function of the Church is to extend the Incarnation, and all that it implies, into human history, till her Lord shall come. From one point of view the Church may rightly be regarded as the appointed guardian of the religion of the Incarnation. Apart from the Incarnation there is and can be no certitude of the Fatherhood of God. Hence I trace in this elementary function of the Church the first exhibition of the unique greatness of her possession of the gift of Knowledge. In the Catholic Church alone resides security for the vital truth of the Incarnation, and therefore alone in her resides security for the doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood. I am the last person in the world to deny or ignore the Christian status and

Christian life of devoted and social service of religious bodies of Christians which appear in their organized form to be external to historic and Catholic Christianity; but if the perpetuation of the truth is to depend upon such divided and anti-dogmatic sections of the Christian community, I, indeed, would tremble for its future. While we recognize to the full the admirable work they have done for the sacred cause of religion, it is not on them we can depend. If the truths of the Incarnation are to pass on to posterity, they will do so because they are enshrined in that Church for which the Saviour's promise standeth sure: "The gates of hell shall not prevail."

The little systems of a day, a year, a century of years will pass. It is on that venerable empire of Jesus which was hoary with a thousand years of service for humanity before our own great empire began, that the eyes of those who hope for the future of their religion are fixed.

If when the Son of Man shall come, He shall find faith on the earth, it will be because the great Church Catholic, instinct with the spirit of Knowledge, has passed on the saving truth.

(2) Perhaps of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the early days of the history of the Church, this shines out most conspicuously. Many reasons, some good, some bad, have been given to account for the early and rapid spread of Christianity.

Too often the chiefest reason of them all is left out of account. It is a wonderful picture, that of the kingdom of God coming to mankind with her great secret for the cure of the woes of the human race. To a world darkened by ignorance and depression and cruelty, a world largely composed of slaves, a world where the few tasted of boundless luxury while the many toiled and suffered, the Church of God came with Her glorious message from the God Who cared infinitely, from the God Who had demonstrated the Fatherhood by His own Blood shed upon the cross. When that message fell upon the ears of the weary and heavy-laden of old, the prisoners leaped to loose their chains. Here was God's home for the oppressed. Here was the Treasure House where might be obtained the priceless boon of forgiveness for those sins which alienated the life from God. Here was the revelation of the Father's love in clear and unmistakable form. The knowledge of the love of God for His poor, sinful, suffering children was her secret, and under the influence of that magic spell the myriads of mankind passed over to her side.

Nor was it merely the message. It was more, it was the message lived out in her life. The practical benevolence, the philanthropy of the early Christian Church presented possibly a force of even greater attraction than the message.

From the Fatherhood of God springs the doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man, and the Church has never shown herself so instinct with the Holy Spirit's gift of Knowledge as when she has given evidence of her life of brotherhood. But this deserves a section to itself.

(3) Few sights in London are more impressive than the view up the river from Westminster Bridge. To the thoughtful it is not merely the sight of the vast pile of buildings on the right-hand of the river, where the work of the Imperial Parliament is conducted, or the partial glimpse one gets on the left-hand side of the outline of Lambeth Palace with its three great towers, but the juxtaposition of these two great buildings, one so modern in form if ancient in site, the other so ancient in both form and situation. Why did the Archbishops of Canterbury acquire the Manor of Lambeth? The answer I think is very simple. It was in order that the occupant of that great See, the head of the Church in England, might have access to the King's palace then situate at Westminster. On the Archbishop, then, in special degree, rested the honoured duty, still expressed in the Anglican service for the Consecration of Bishops, of caring for the poor man, of speaking for him, of approaching the person of the King to claim redress for him. In very truth and deed he was the Tribune of the Plebs. There have indeed

been ups and downs in the story, and there have been days in the long history of the Church of England when those who think of Christ our Master and the poor He loves have rejoiced to see His chief servant at all cost fulfilling his sacred duty, and also there have been times when things have turned out very differently. But the juxtaposition of the two buildings is a picture of the relation of the Church to the State in her best ages, and her proclamation of the great truth of the Brotherhood of Man. The Church's care of the poor, the downtrodden and the oppressed, must necessarily take very different shape in different stages of her life. I can only treat as the grossest calumny upon her Bishops the statement that their modern record in this relation is a dubious one. But it is good to think of the days of Magna Charta and such like times, when the names of the greatest leaders of the Church stood for freedom from oppression. Of one thing we may be very sure. Such expression of brotherhood as there has been, springs from the spirit of Knowledge, and is derived from her sure possession of the secret of the Father's love. If we would revive her best ages, we shall pray that within the Body this great gift may once more be stirred up into flame.

(C) This gift has a practical relation of the first importance to the spiritual life.

Through this agency the Holy Spirit will lead the soul to that for which it was made, and apart from which it cannot rest. In the All-Father's love it can alone find its peace amid the manifold changes of the world. Amid all this whirling maze of men and things in which its lot is cast, the soul cries out for some fixed point on which it can rest securely. "O set me up upon the Rock that is higher than I." However beautiful may be the revelation of God in nature the soul craves instinctively for the God Who transcends nature, the Eternal, unchanging Father Who, seated on His throne above the waterfloods, be the earth never so unquiet, changes not. In such a surrender of the heart and mind and will there is rest and abiding peace.

> Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
> Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
> Change and decay in all around I see;
> O Thou who changest not, abide with me!

The Peace of God which passeth all understanding has many conditions. Without this one it cannot be at all. The gift is within by the laying on of hands, and it needs but our using it to realize all that was meant by St. John when he said, "We love Him because He first loved us." From all eternity He thought of us. The conditions of our mortal life are determined by His unchanging love. To love and trust the All-

Father Who loves us infinitely more than we can ever hope to love Him, is eternal life, and we cannot love and trust Him but by the Spirit of Knowledge which reveals Him to us.

(2) In this gift lies the true secret of attendance at public worship. The question is often debated, Why do not working-men go to church? And various answers are given, all with many grains of truth in them no doubt, but the real answer lies far behind all the various excuses. They do not go to Church because they do not love God. If they really loved God, however inferior the preaching, and however dull the service, and however inadequate the accommodation, they would flock to their Heavenly Father's House. Somehow, someway along this road lies the cure. The cheapening of religion, the sensational advertisements, the pleasant Sunday afternoon, these and a thousand other expedients may be tried, but at best their success can be but temporary. For why do men not love God except that they have failed to discover that He is lovable? And if they have so failed, may it not be that the fault rests with those who name the name of Christ? Rightly or wrongly Christ is judged of by His professing followers. The love of the All-Father, reflected in the tender and loving-kindness of His elect, always wins. I can think now of parishes where the service is anything but attractive, and

the preaching far below the average in intellectual power, yet where the Church is besieged by crowded congregations, just because in the priest there is a strong and loving heart which finds its expression in a life of ungrudging and self-sacrificing service for his people.

What a confession of failure is that which Browning puts into the mouth of the dying Paracelsus, and what light it throws upon ministerial failure of to-day!

> In my own heart love had not been made wise
> To trace love's faint beginnings in mankind,
> To know even hate is but a mask of love's,
> To see a good in evil and a hope
> In ill success, to sympathize, be proud
> Of their half reasons, faint aspirings, dim
> Struggles for truth, their poorest fallacies,
> Their prejudice, and fears, and cares, and doubts;
> All with a touch of nobleness, despite
> Their error, upward tending all though weak,
> Like plants in mines which never saw the sun,
> But dream of him, and guess where he may be.
> And do their best to climb and get to him.
> All this I knew not, and I failed.

We must first realize the Father's love ourselves ere we can venture to look out upon mankind with something of His love, and so win men back to God as alone they can be won.

(3) Yes, the gift of spiritual Knowledge always leads us back to conduct. We are the children of light. We Christians know, as none else can know, the revelation of the Father's love. What is

the witness of our daily life? Alas! what is the witness of the Church? Has not the time come for the truce of God to be proclaimed between contending schools of thought within the Body? How can Christ's little ones realize the love of God when they have before them the sad spectacle of Christian men and women biting and devouring one another? Let us rise to the dignity of our high calling, and remember Whose great name we bear. One sincere Christian, instinct with this gift of the Holy Ghost, who loves God for His own dear Name's sake, and His fellow-creatures for the sake of the God Who loved them and died for them, is a more potent evidence for Christianity than all the intellectual evidence that was ever produced. Christian character, radiant with the light of Eternity and fused with the Divine love, always has prevailed and ever will prevail. In the world to come an innumerable company will arise and call such blessed.

"O Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life; Grant us perfectly to know Thy Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life; that, following the steps of Thy holy Apostles, we may stedfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

VII

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST—COUNSEL

THE gift of Counsel has been defined as that grace which the Holy Spirit bestows upon us whereby we are enabled to work out our salvation in relation to others. It is the gift which deals with Humanity, as in essence social.

Strictly speaking, there is, and can be, rightly regarded, no opposition between the socialistic and the individualistic view of Humanity. The two are joined together by God and should never be divided, for if the individual can only thrive and grow under social conditions, it is equally true that the community can only progress as it is enriched by the contribution of all that individuality has to give. We are far from having attained to the true balance between these two great conceptions, which are from one point of view only another illustration of the objective and the subjective in life, that essential cleavage in human thought which underlies most of the problems of life. In each gener-

ation there may be traced the law of reaction and reassertion in relation either to one view or the other. At the present moment in England we are in the full tide of a socialistic movement, and therefore this gift of the Holy Spirit has a very special and peculiar interest; but I think he must be a very shallow student of human nature, as it expresses itself in the Englishman, if he does not foresee the approach of a wave of reaction in modern times springing from that sturdy individualism which has always been so marked a feature in the race as its motive force.

But the one is the complement of the other. Both ideas are essential; and may it not be said both have their relation to that Divine Image in which man is made, for God is one, and yet Blessed be God for the revelation of the Holy and undivided Trinity. God in essence is also social. We are learning more and more to see that the mystery of our Personality is inexplicable in the isolation and separation of Personality, but that Personality has in it vital qualities which compel us to find ourselves in relation to the lives of others.

(A) Let us look at this gift as we find it in our Blessed Lord on Whom the Holy Spirit descended without measure.

(1) If Old Testament prophecy means anything at all, this is the one gift which stands out pre-

eminent in the Messiah because it is the one gift which has been foretold. Without questioning the possible immediate reference of that great prophetical utterance to the circumstances of the time, Isaiah either spake more than he knew, or else in mystery he saw the approach of the King of Men when he sang, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and His name shall be called Wonderful, *Counsellor*, the Everlasting Father, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace." It is true that the great argument from Prophecy cannot be stated in the simple way in which it appealed to our forefathers; but in broad outline that wonderful four-fold stream of the Davidic King, of the unveiling of Jehovah, of the suffering servant, and of the great Deliverer, is still as strong as ever, and still finds its goal in the Person of our Blessed Lord. Prediction then leads us to expect the manifestation of this gift in the Saviour of mankind.

(2) What prediction suggests, experience confirms. From the gift of Counsel come those whispered invitations of the Holy Spirit to the dedicated life. The Counsels of perfection spring directly from this gift. It is not that God cares only for the elect, and calls some of them to the special and the dedicated life of perfection, and ignores the great mass of mankind. It is simply that the many may be reached and influenced by

the dedicated few. The vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience—these Counsels of perfection are but the expression of the Divine call to special work and service. To such a life in its primary sense all are not called. To such a life pre-eminently the Saviour *was* called. He is the supreme example of the poor life, the single life, the obedient life. Thus early did the Holy Spirit develop in Him by the Spirit of Counsel, the call to the dedicated life.

(3) But we may trace it no less clearly in that aspect of our Lord's life which is really the counterpart of what has just been said. The essence of His life was the life of special vocation under the self-imposed restraint of poverty, obedience, and chastity. Yet this is far from expressing the whole of it. There is an aspect which was a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to the religion of His day. It is the vision of the Social Christ. In His own words, which express with ironic but pathetic force the popular verdict—The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they said, Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber. It is an extreme and malicious statement of a very vital aspect of the Saviour's life. The innocent joys of mankind are not foreign to Him. Though the stainless contact with human sin and the effort for our redemption necessitated the manifestation of Him as the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, this is not the whole of the

picture. In those years of retirement at Nazareth, when the Divine Son of Man, the pattern Son, worked as a carpenter to support His human mother, there was social joy. The first miracle that He wrought at Cana of Galilee was at a marriage feast, the very Sacrament of the social in mankind. If in the later period of His ministry, when He was maturing His plans for the conquest of the world, there was a retirement, a reserve, a concentration upon the few, it was that in and through that few the many might ultimately be most efficiently reached, and in the earlier years of the ministry there was the freest mingling with the world of men. The essence of the Gospel is social. It is a Gospel of the kingdom. It is a one-sided mistake to contemplate salvation as the redemption of a series of isolated units, each to himself, each purchasing his own individual safety. It is salvation in the Body, in the kingdom, in the society, in the Church, which Christ contemplated. And it is not without the deepest significance that the final state of glory is revealed to us under the image of that Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem, the most complete expression of the social that there is.

(4) But I think we shall see the gift even more clearly in our Lord's method of work. If any man might have despaired of mankind He might. With great deliberation after a night spent in prayer,

and, as St. Luke tells us, after carefully conning over the names of the disciples as a body and selecting those best fitted for the Apostolate, He deliberately adopts the plan of employing human agents. And in spite of the most cruel disappointments, the basest treachery, and an exhibition of the most hopeless ingratitude, He still persists in the same method.

There was none of that hopeless despair in human nature into which the best of mankind have sometimes fallen when trusted agents have failed, or average mankind has failed to supply adequate material—that hopeless despair which impels a man to the fatal conclusion that he cannot trust others to do anything, that he must do every thing himself, or it would not be done at all.

Nor was there any of that pitiable jealousy of subordinates which sometimes has beset the noblest of minds. Christ had a royal trust in mankind in spite of bitter failures, and He had a generous delight in the visible success of His agents, a success which, in His infinite wisdom and love, He did not condescend to taste in the days of His earthly ministry. It was but a handful of disciples who saluted the Master as He withdrew from the earth His visible presence, but a handful after all the three years' personal ministry—the Agony, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection—while the Prince of the Apostles gathered

into the Gospel net three thousand souls in one day.

The gift of Counsel is perhaps most clearly seen in the natural man in the handling of men, in the employment of the proper agent, in the almost unlimited trust and confidence reposed in subordinates. It is important to point out that in Him, Who is the Crown of Humanity, all this is seen in the fullest measure.

(5) There are innumerable examples of this gift in our blessed Lord. One more must claim our attention before we pass on to a consideration of the gift as it finds its expression in the Church.

In the social relations of mankind, whatever they may be, there is one quality without which they must for the most part fail—one quality which is a wonderful combination of sympathy, love, refinement, tender consideration, and acute and delicate perception. It is what we call, for want of a better name, *tact*, or the power of coming into effective touch with others.

For want of this the best of us fail. It is one of the Holy Spirit's best gifts, and it is, of course, conspicuous in our Lord's life. It is very difficult to select instances when so many present themselves, but look at it in one or two very simple relations. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, comes to our Blessed Lord by night. A tactless person

would have said, "If you have not the moral courage to approach me by day I certainly cannot receive you by night." In other words, they would have had all or nothing, and they would have lost the man. Our Lord never dealt with people in that way, never does now, blessed be His gracious and tender love for the souls of men. Quite otherwise did He deal with Nicodemus, and with rich results. It was not until I saw the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau that I realized with what splendid instinct those poor peasants had seized hold of the incident of Nicodemus, and what the timid inquirer had to go through, and what he did go through for our own Lord's sake so bravely, at the hands of his brethren of the Sanhedrin.

That matchless account of the interview with St. Peter after the Resurrection, which St. John gives us, will furnish even a more striking example of what I mean, while the interview between our Lord and the Samaritan woman must for ever remain a model for those who with tactful power will convince the sinful of their sins.

(B) A similar difficulty to the last besets the consideration of the expression of this great gift in the life of the Church. The illustrations are so many, and they are all so important, that it is difficult to select.

(1) Obviously enough, the Church herself is the supreme example. We constantly need reminding

in these days, when there is serious danger through the pressure of undenominationalism, of the idea of the Church being eliminated, that the idea of the Church is of the very essence of the Faith. But let us turn from this clear and obvious line to one aspect of the life of the Church. The spirit of Counsel instinct within her has always striven to evolve her life upon conciliar lines, and when these have been ignored or neglected the result has always been disastrous to her welfare. We need not turn for illustration outside our own Communion. When Sir Robert Walpole, by an act of the most high-handed and unjustifiable tyranny, closed the Convocations of the Church of England, he inflicted upon her a blow from the force of which she is still reeling. Half our troubles in these days of stress date from that supreme example of the quenching of the Spirit in this gift of Counsel. No one would dream of enforcing judicial decisions in the State based on statutes which had remained untouched for three hundred years. The very strength of the judicial power in England is that, along with it, there is a free Parliament, which can revise and correct the inevitable difficulties which the dead hand in law always must create. But that which no Englishman would dream of allowing in the State is precisely what has taken place in the Church. Her living voice was stifled for nigh 150 years.

Even now when her Convocations meet they are unreformed, and until the issue of Letters of Business they have little power to do anything save debate. Yet we are still held and bound by judicial decisions which are based upon the statutes of the Reformation settlements three hundred years ago, and the Act of Uniformity.

I am anxious to keep this little book as far as possible from controversy, otherwise I think it would be an interesting line of thought to try and discover how far the centralizing policy of the Papacy has interfered with the free action of the Holy Spirit in the later Councils of the Church. The great councils of the Church spring directly from the spirit of Counsel. Their decisions are of the very first importance both in themselves, and still more when the Church diffusive, the whole body of the faithful, ratifies and confirms the decisions of the Church collective.

(2) The action of the Holy Spirit within the Church may also very clearly be traced in her wonderful storehouse of what, for want of a better term, we must call ascetic theology. During her long history she has acquired a quite unique experience of human nature, and by virtue of this great gift of Counsel she has created a vast literature which deals with the application of the principles of religion to the individual. The present writer cannot claim to have read very

deeply in this department, but the study to some extent, at any rate, is a duty of binding obligation upon those who are called to advise, and direct the spiritual life of others, and therefore of course he has some little acquaintance with it. That little acquaintance only fills him with amazement and awe at the tenderness, the discrimination, the superb power of insight into the human heart and motives which is the normal tone in such literature. He can only say that if he wanted a very fair, just, and unbiassed verdict upon any action of his in morals, and yet a verdict intensely human and tender in its leniency, he would go to some priest whose life had been spent in the study of such literature and in its application to individual souls.

(3) One other illustration, and only one, from the life of the Church must suffice. We saw that the Spirit of Counsel in the Sacred Humanity was the basis of those counsels of perfection to which the Christ was called in poverty, obedience, and chastity. It is no less true of His Body, the Church. It is true of the Church as a whole in her relation to the world. There have been sad and shameful periods in her history, in reading which the student shudders at the revelation of religious depravity, but it is always safe to assert that never in her worst days has she reached the depravity around her. That has always been

infinitely worse. To take one illustration out of many. Probably the worst period of degradation in the English Church was that of the first, the second, and part of the third monarchy of the Hanoverian dynasty. Yet bad as it was, and unspiritual and worldly as was the general tone of the clergy, it was nothing like as bad as the condition of the State at that time. The Holy Spirit through the gift of Counsel does, it seems to me at any rate, secure this *relative* perfection which has a value all its own. But His action in this respect is even more clearly seen in the rise of Monasticism. Say what we will of its abuses—fanatical, moral, and otherwise—I do not think it can be questioned that these counsels of perfection, lived out in community life, did, as a matter of fact, by precept and example, leaven the whole lump, and lift it to infinitely higher ranges of spirituality. We are beginning now at last to find out the truth about the condition of the monasteries and their treatment at the time of the Reformation; and, allowing here and there for exceptional cases where grievous moral decay or gross idleness justified extinction, the verdict of most impartial historians is that they have been shamefully traduced. Amongst the brighter signs of our time in the religious sphere is the revival of the monastic orders. We may well beseech the Holy Spirit by His great gift

to extend this great movement in the English Church.

(C) This great gift is within us all as certainly as that Apostolic hands have been laid upon our heads. What is its practical import in the spiritual life?

(1) First, a word must be said about it in its most obvious relation to the giving and receiving of advice. There are faithful and modest servants of the Holy Spirit who cannot but know through the many who seek their advice, that they are regarded as, in extra degree, instinct with this Spirit of Counsel. Well, it is a perilous and yet a very blessed position—perilous, because its characteristic temptation must be to the sin of pride, and blessed, because there are few ways which are more helpful to others if we desire to live the life of service. The more people claim our help in this relation, the more thankful we should be and the more we should strive to be approachable and accessible. We must never grudge the time and trouble and sometimes the tiresomeness which such a ministry involves, whether it be clerical or lay, and never show nor feel the slightest resentment if our advice is not taken. Responsibility ends with the giving of the best and the most disinterested counsel at our disposal, and it is always well to say quite clearly, at the very beginning of an interview, that we are very thankful to be of service and will do our best,

but that we have no feelings whatsoever if our advice is not taken. Above all things, we must never attempt to force our decision upon those who come for our help. Nothing in this world can relieve the individual conscience of its sacred responsibility. Unless the circumstances be very exceptional, on grave matters of faith and morals, each soul ultimately *must* decide for itself before God.

So much must be said about those who are called to give Counsel. Less, I think, need be said about those who seek it. It sounds a platitude to say, Do not be always seeking advice; yet the spiritual life could give evidence of character spoilt, and a miserable scrupulosity substituted for the liberty whereunto Christ has made us free, by an unwise reliance upon the advice of others in trifling matters. It is less, perhaps, of a truism, but a very obvious and very necessary thing to say, that it is a grievous mistake, even in graver things, to consult too many. It also has its pitfall in the sin of pride, strange as it is, in so seemingly humble a practice.

Perhaps the following rules may be of service to those who seek the Holy Spirit's guidance which is given through the gift of Counsel in matters of difficulty. They are in substance those given by the late Professor Drummond—(1) Pray about it. (2) Think about it. (3) Talk to

wise people about it, but not to too many. (4) Beware of the bias of your own nature, but do not let it unduly discount your decision—your nature is God-given. (5) Then decide definitely. (6) Refuse to reconsider the decision unless under the gravest necessity, and do not go back on it. (7) You will not find out until long after how wonderfully you have been led by the Holy Spirit; but you *will* find it out.

(2) Another direct outcome of the working of this gift within will be traced in a capacity to work in association with others. I do not want to say hard and bitter things, but we all know the opposite type to this. In our clubs there is the type we know so well, the man we describe as not a clubable man. There are those who will work in a committee of one, but who are quite hopeless when they are set to work with others. There are those we know of, and they are the ruin of good work in and out of the Church, good people, too, in the main, who, from lack of tact, are the despair of their superiors and the bane of Church life. And it is all for lack of the cultivation of this gift. I do not say that all can show this spirit in equal degree. In this, as in so many other things, natural disposition has much to say; but there are homes divided and torn with strife, there are churches rent with faction, there are religious houses split up into parties, and there

are priests of God parted asunder with quarrels as sharply as were St. Paul and St. Barnabas, just because this gift is not stirred up into flame.

(3) Nor less clearly will this gift be seen in a readiness to learn from others, that sure and certain mark of the basal grace of Humility in the spiritual life. The Spirit of Counsel is really the Spirit of sacred study. It is a bitter saying, but it has in it an element of truth, "that every Englishman is a theologian by right of birth." In the other sciences he is content to learn, but in the most difficult of them all he has no need to learn anything. There is, of course, much to be said on the other side, but sometimes, when we read the light treatment of the gravest questions in the newspapers, or when we listen to glib and cocksure opinions on grave theological questions about which the ablest and the best theologians speak with bated breath, or the contemptuous assumption that some point in the Church's faith or morals is hopelessly wrong, we cannot but long for an outpouring of the Spirit of Counsel.

(4) The essence of the Christian life is social. It finds its expression in the Church. The social life of the Church finds its highest expression in the life of worship. It is in the relation of the spiritual life to the life of public worship that, perhaps, we shall find the highest manifestation

of this wonderful gift. Private worship can never take the place of public duty in this relation. All the worship of God which is poured out to the God of nature in the open country, can never supersede that *minimum obligation* of the Christian—*the Lord's service on the Lord's Day.* The Spirit of Counsel will tell us, clearly enough, that it is dangerous to tamper with the social expression of our holy religion, that it is a duty of binding obligation either to receive Communion or to be present at the celebration of the Christian Mysteries on the Lord's Day.

"Blessed Spirit, Almighty God, forgive, we beseech Thee, our waywardness, and blindness of heart, and bestow on us the Spirit of Counsel. In perplexities and difficulties, be Thou our Light, teaching us to discern the evil from the good, directing us that our footsteps slip not. Instruct us in all the ways of holiness, by mortification to overcome our sins, by obedience to subdue our selfishness, by spiritual discipline to sanctify our thoughts, words, and actions, that, ever going on to perfection, we may attain unto the fellowship of Thy Saints in bliss. Amen." (From the "Short Office of the Holy Ghost.")

VIII

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST—GHOSTLY STRENGTH

THE gift of Ghostly Strength carries our thoughts at once into the active life of the Christian. The gift of Counsel is poised, so to speak, between the interior and the exterior life. Ghostly Strength is concerned with the Will, which it at once quickens into energy, braces and strengthens. By this gift perseverance is secured, and its characteristic feature is the grace of Christian Fortitude.

(A) In our Incarnate Lord it is again, as with all the other gifts, most conspicuously seen.

(1) He was the greatest Reformer of all that long roll-call of the Heroes of Humanity who have dared to expose established abuses and to remedy them, and who have suffered in that sacred cause. Let us content ourselves with one illustration out of many. The fourth Gospel differs from the other three, in that it is obviously the review of a disciple looking back through the long vista of half a century upon the wonderful life of

the Incarnate God, after a close realization of His Godhead during that period, and quite possibly with the contents in broad outline of the other three Gospels before him. It is a Gospel which gives the clearest indication from internal evidence of very distinct plan and design. Each miracle which the writer selects is instinct with meaning, and the same evidence of design is seen with equal clearness in what he records and in what he leaves out. Looking back over that long period to the pattern Life, St. John was able to see with special clearness the salient points, and I think if he had been asked what it was, in his opinion, which precipitated the world's tragedy, he would have said, judging by the Gospel, that it was our Lord's attitude towards the Sabbatarian ideas of the Jews of His day. With all the instinct of a great commander, our Lord deliberately seems to have selected this the most tender point in the Jewish mind as, at any rate, one of His chosen battlefields. I am not now concerned with the reasons for that choice. They would repay a careful analysis. But look at the facts. He was undoubtedly regarded as a Sabbath-breaker, and the possibility of such a charge being made and His fearless selection of this subject of debate amid the misunderstandings likely to arise from it, stamps Him as one of the bravest men that ever lived, the chiefest of Reformers.

(2) It is less obvious perhaps, but equally certain, that the gift may be traced in His fearless assertion of the essentially spiritual nature of the Messianic idea. The Jew had not then grasped, as indeed he has not yet understood, this essential feature of the great line of prophecy concerning the Messiah. To him the Great Deliverer was and is to be one who would rescue Israel from her position of subjection amongst the nations, and elevate her by his strong right arm to the position of a queen amongst the nations reigning over an empire of federated states. There is some such dream in the Jewish mind still. In our Lord's day it was the dominant idea of the Messiah in Jewish thought. Hence those frequent attempts to take the young Nazarene Prophet and make Him a King, attempts which He always resisted, and attempts the resistance of which accounts for the sullen and baffled vengeance which was meted out to One Whom the Jewish world had come to regard as the first of impostors.

From their standpoint He had deceived them. Even in the apostolic college itself there is not wanting evidence of such feelings of mortified disappointment, and perhaps the dark tragedy of the treachery of Judas was precipitated by this line of policy. Nor, I think, are we without evidence that the temptation to extend His

message along the lines of an earthly Messiahship was a very real one to the Saviour Himself. Unless we are content to strip the Temptation in the Wilderness of all reality as a temptation, the presentation by Satan of the kingdoms of this world before the eye of our Lord, and his offer to place their power at His disposal, must have been a very great temptation. It was resisted as was also the temptation to make Him an earthly King; but—may we not say it with all reverence?—it was in all probability by the unique presence of the gift of Spiritual Strength in the Sacred Humanity that this supreme temptation was overcome.

(3) In His onslaught upon established abuses, in His fearless assertion of the spirituality of the Messianic claim, we trace this gift. No less surely shall we find it in His claim to Deity. I use the term Deity to express that unique claim because only by such a term can we maintain our Lord's claim to be Divine in some unique sense such as no other man ever can claim—the claim which St. John puts forward in his prologue to the fourth Gospel. It shocked and repelled the Jew as, expressed in the majestic language of the Nicene Creed, it still shocks and repels many at the present day. But nevertheless it was made then, as it is made now by the Church Catholic, without flinching, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. Renan says: "Depend upon it,

sooner or later human beings will demand the human God"; and it is about the truest thing he ever said. The revelation of the Incarnate God, the God we can, so to speak, touch, handle, and understand, for believers makes life a lucid story, the only key which unlocks the riddle of the universe. But to the Jew it was nothing less than a blasphemous horror. Their most essential conception of God, though they might have balanced their view, had they chosen, by other scriptural teaching, was just the opposite of this. To them it was unthinkable that the great Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, Unlimited, and Uncontrolled God should reveal Himself to His human children under the limitation of time and sense. Unthinkable and blasphemous; and therefore when this daring young Prophet made the stupendous claim, "Before Abraham was, I am," with a suggestion of the nameless name, the "I am that I am," the Eternal self-existing Being, they took up stones to kill Him. If sometimes there is a disposition to apologize for the Jew thus acting up to his conviction, I think sometimes we might spare a moment to adore Him Who thus with splendid daring made His unique claim to Godhead, and ask Him for something of that Spirit of Ghostly Strength which was within Him, to enable us equally to strive in a sceptical age to proclaim the same sublime truth.

(4) Two more examples of this gift in the

Sacred Humanity must be given, though we can only touch upon them very slightly; and indeed, what has already been said is of itself amply sufficient for our purpose. But it is impossible to ignore in this connection (*a*) our Lord's strength of purpose in dealing with others; and (*b*) the sublime manifestation of this gift in the Passion and the Cross.

(*a*) I hesitate which example to select. The raising of Lazarus, with its extraordinary unfolding of the Saviour's power to bide His time, even although it involved the death of a dearly loved friend, is very tempting. The pathetic complaint has often been re-echoed in the heart of the mourner, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died." The case of the appeal of the Syro-phœnicean woman is equally tempting. Perhaps the latter will serve our purpose best. Certainly a devout consideration of its innermost meaning has brought unbounded comfort to those spiritually distressed by the hardness of the way. It is quite an extraordinary instance of the Saviour's power to bide His time, though His tender heart must have yearned to grant the petition forthwith. "My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil" is the reiterated cry of agony, and the tenderest of mankind passes on in chilling silence. "Send her away, for she crieth after us." The disciples themselves are moved with compassion. Then she follows Him

into the house, and the pitiable cry goes forth to Him Who is more ready to hear than we to pray, and Who is wont to give more than either we desire or deserve, "Lord, help me." "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it unto the dogs." This is all she gets from Him who loveth all His human children. "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." He is only waiting His time to be gracious to her, only waiting to crown that faithful heart which *will* persist in its love, even through barriers imposed by the Lord Himself. "O woman, great is thy faith —be it unto thee even as thou wilt." By the Spirit of Strength within, our Lord is strong enough to wait, strong enough, blessed be His Holy name, to inflict pain upon those He loves and even delay to bless them. He discerns a wider range of blessing possible through waiting. It is but a parable of the wider field of the providential government of God. With Him there are no short cuts. He will never subordinate the greater blessing of the future to the immediate gain of the moment. God is strong enough to wait. Are we far wrong if we trace the presence of the gift again in the second Temptation and in the steadfast refusal to grant the sign from Heaven? "Leave Now to dogs and apes. Man has for ever." In the realization of the Eternal possibilities of Humanity, God can wait and always *does* wait. He waits amid the

agony of the Sacred Heart when it longs to intervene, but with certain knowledge knows that to do so is not the better way. Strength of purpose springs directly from the Spirit of Strength.

(*b*) Now, let us look at it in the revelation of the Passion and the Cross. Along that last journey to Jerusalem the Holy Spirit leads the Christ with unfaltering steps, though in the distance He clearly discerns the scene on Calvary. The Passion throughout is instinct with this gift. Perhaps, next to Calvary, it is most clearly seen in Gethsemane. But as we read through those long Gospels in Holy Week, perhaps the dominant impression that is left amid all that wonderful record of Divine Fortitude is the witness of His reserve of silence. Think for a moment of that Divine figure, robed in mock majesty. There He stands—our God and King—with marks of shame and spitting and buffeting upon Him, silent—the very embodiment of this great grace of the Holy Ghost. Contrast Him for one moment with one of the greatest of His followers, with St. Paul. Great as was the apostle's fortitude in other ways, when smitten by command of the High Priest his impetuous spirit flamed out with bitter threats: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall!" With regard to the Cross itself, what can we say of that perfect revelation of sublime fortitude, but that in its tender appeal for pity for His murderers,

in its loving compassion for His fellow sufferers, in its tender solicitude for His Mother above all, in its voluntary persistence amid intolerable agony, it is the most complete example of all, of Him Who was not only the Lamb of God, slain in will and intention from the foundation of the world, but Who was also the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the most marvellous combination of strength and gentleness ever exhibited by our frail Humanity.

(B) Two examples of this gift in the Earthly Home of the Spirit, the Church, must suffice.

(1) We may trace it most clearly, as we may trace it first in the order of time, in the life of witness as expressed in the early martyrs. Few things in this life are more unaccountable, on natural grounds, than the remarkable change in the Apostolic College after the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It is the transformation of a cowardly group of men who had proved faithless to their Lord and Master into a body of men face to face with the powers that be, who evinced the most extraordinary courage in their resolute endurance of suffering, and their determination to persist in the proclamation of their message.

The gift of Ghostly Strength had come upon them. By it they were enabled to face all things for their Master's sake, even to the laying down of their lives. And later on in the history of the Church what a wonderful record of the pres-

ence of this great gift in the Church we have in the long roll-call of the martyrs of the Early Church. No age, no class, no condition of life is wanting. And it is not merely that old men with life nigh over, and young men and maidens with life opening out before them, and boys and girls and little children on the threshold of existence, seal their faith by their death, but the early records reveal the extraordinary cheerfulness and the buoyant courage with which it was done. Sometimes we get a little glimpse of sublimer courage still, the courage or the thoughtful, the courage which, because it is thoughtful, has been cruelly slandered. The Christian men, it has been observed, always insisted that their women and children should suffer first, while they waited in the ante-chamber of death. There have not been wanting those who cheaply said the Christian men prized life too dearly not to cling on to the end. The real explanation is known, and it is a very striking one. It was to spare their womenkind and children the sight of their own death that they waited and saw those dearest to them die in the arena. But the martyr spirit is by no means confined to the early or the later martyrs in deed. There are numerous martyrs of will and intention, and we need not go very far into the history of our own Church to find them. The most

marked characteristic of the early Tractarians was, I think, this same spirit of Fortitude as the expression of the Spirit's gift of Ghostly Strength within them. They had before them a task which might well make the stoutest heart quail, and there were conditions, which arose in the great campaign, such as might well have induced the bravest amongst them to throw up the whole enterprise in despair. It is indeed refreshing in these more degenerate days, when so little makes us fainthearted, to re-read the great story of the movement which has transformed the English Church. Of one of the leaders—the greatest of them all, and the inspiring spirit of the movement in later times—it has been said, and the story of his life, I think, demonstrates it, that his long life was one continuous crucifixion. Amid misrepresentation from within and from without, with the foreign communion ever whispering, through his dearest friend, that this was no place for him, and his fellow-Churchmen too often urging him to be gone, as a traitor to his spiritual mother, constantly betrayed by those he had trusted most completely, deserted by many of his friends, an object of suspicion to his superior officers, and the target for a storm of obloquy hardly paralleled, Dr. Pusey held his dauntless way, the very embodiment of moral, spiritual, and physical courage; the supreme instance, in my judgment, in the English

Church, save one, of the possession of this great gift.

Let us, in these degenerate days, hold up the feeble hands and strengthen the weak knees by such examples from early days, and from later times, of the strength and the power which reside in this priceless gift of the Holy Ghost.

(2) But the persistence of the Church through these two thousand years of ceaseless conflict is as complete an example as we could desire of the possession of this great gift. The Book of God's providential dealing which was seen by St. John in the right hand of Him who sat upon the throne, which the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevailed to open and to unloose the seals thereof, while it conveys the precious truth that the great trials of the world are under supreme control, is also a revelation of the trials through which, in the providence of God, His Church must pass. As one by one these seals are opened, and there passes before our eyes the revelation of the seals—the mystery of conquest, of war, of famine, of death, of hades, and of the vast convulsions in human life of which the most fitting symbols are the great earthquake and the darkened sun, and the falling of the stars from the heavenly places, we seem to see by anticipation a most complete picture of the history of the Church which is almost miraculous in its presentation of fact. By

the Spirit of Strength the Church has passed through all these trials, trials not once nor twice repeated in her history. Nothing can destroy the empire of Jesus. There is a vital energy within the Church which will impel her to persist until her Lord shall come. And as this is true of the general history, so it is equally true of that deposit of the faith she has guarded so faithfully all these ages. The Catholic faith will persist because of the spirit of Fortitude. Each age sings its triumph song of victory over the one absolute and final revelation of the Most High God, but as it sings and the years roll on, its song changes to a wail of defeat. Doubtless there is always need of restatement and of reinterpretation of the unchanging deposit of the faith, but in essence it never changes, for truth cannot change. The faith persists because it is instinct with this great gift of the Spirit. In these days, when attack after attack almost beats down the bravest defences of the faith, it is well to remember this fact, and to know that God has made provision for, and can take care of, the defence of His own truth. Nothing can destroy it. Each age contributes its quota of spoils to Him Who has gone forth conquering and to conquer, and this age will prove no exception to the rule ere it makes way to another age equally under control, and equally destined to serve the high purpose of the true King of men.

(C) The gift of spiritual strength is within. It is secured to us by the laying on of hands. Where shall we seek for its manifestation?

(1) Most obviously in the power to persevere to the end. The strength to do so is close at hand. It but needs to be used. Alas, for the neglect! Few things are more sad to a priest of any standing than the investigation of the lists of candidates he has prepared for confirmation. Making all allowance for lack of intelligence as to the present whereabouts of many candidates, and of the impossibility of accurately gauging the spiritual position of many others, there is a pathetic residuum of those about whom, alas! he knows only too well there has been a sad falling away. And it all seemed so bright on the confirmation day. Those eager young lives were so much in earnest, and it all seemed to them then so easy to go steadily along the good path. Why have they failed? Particular reasons here and there may be produced, but the main cause of failure is that they have not strenuously stirred up the gift of spiritual Strength which then was given them. The Holy Scriptures are full of warning concerning those who in earlier life did run well, but who were hindered in their later years. Even the companionship of an apostle did not prevent Demas from falling away, and all the bright promise of Solomon's youth did not stay the advance of that cynical and sinful old age

of which the Book of Ecclesiastes is so painful a revelation.

If ever we are tempted to think that it is no use trying, that the forces opposed to us are too strong, that we had better do as others do and drift, let us renew our strength at the source of strength, and persevere along the narrow way. There is no other road that leadeth to eternal life.

(2) Even amongst those who persevere there come times of grievous spiritual depression—dark days when the heavens seem as brass and God far away; when to pray is the hardest labour unrelieved by spiritual joy, and the very monotony of piety is its worst enemy; when the very liberty, or seeming liberty and unrestraint of sin call the soul of the holiest to destruction; when the vale of misery is nothing but a vale of misery, and the most faithful cannot use it as a well. These are dark and dangerous times—times when the soul cries out, "All Thy waves and storms are gone over me"—times when the spiritual life can but endure, when all progress and all joy must go for the time. It is during such times that we must turn to the gift of Spiritual strength for help to endure until the tyranny be overpast, and the times of refreshment come once more to the soul, as assuredly they will if we wait in hope.

(3) It is written, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye

fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." In other words, our Lord would say: "So use your environment, that when you die, it may greet you as a friend." The natural life is a parable of the spiritual. The very forces which brace us when resisted and controlled by the healthy body, the moment that organism becomes too enfeebled to resist, become the engines of its destruction and decay. Our environment from the spiritual point of view is so much raw material which may be worked up to our endless joy or loss. From this point of view our life must be one long probation and trial until God calls us to rest. Every stage of life—childhood, youth, middle life, old age—has its appropriate life of temptation, as, indeed, has every class and every trade and every home. And how are we to face this continuous probation except by the gift of Ghostly Strength? So it is with all; but so it specially is with some. There are those, generally the closest to our Blessed Lord, on whom there comes the discipline of trial and temptation in startling severity. Trial upon trial, sorrow upon sorrow, pain upon pain is their lot. These chosen ones stand in the very furnace of the Divine affliction. Strained to the utmost limit of endurance, it would seem they must go under and perish; but it is not so. They are chastened but not consumed. All the time the flames are under the Divine control, and all

the time the gift of Ghostly Strength enables them to persist, as our Lord Himself was strengthened to endure the agony in the garden.

(4) The gift of Ghostly Strength will lead the soul to the Source of strength. By virtue of this gift the whole nature is braced and re-energized in the life of mortification. The body is chastised and kept under, and its life of softness restrained. The same strong Spirit will help the most timid to endure the dread discipline of Confession, and will refresh the weary soul as it struggles against the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, with the bracing tonic of Absolution. Above all, by means of this gift the Holy Spirit will lead the soul to the Altar of God, there to receive the heavenly manna in the power of which it will renew its strength, and struggle on unto the end.

"They shall go from strength to strength, and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Zion."

"Blessed Spirit, have pity, we beseech Thee, on our infirmities and daily failings, and fortify us with the Spirit of Ghostly Strength. Make us courageous and strong to overcome our temptations, to extirpate at any cost the evil tendencies of our nature, that increasing in Faith, in Hope, in Charity, we may persevere in the straight path of a perfect life. Mortify in us all softness, and remove far from us all allurements to ease, or self-

indulgence, that, unshaken in the hour of trial, we may have our place in Thy Sanctuary with Thy holy ones.

In sickness or suffering be Thou, O Holy Spirit, our support; when the powers of darkness assail us, shield us with Thy mighty protection, and keep us faithful in our last hour, that we fall not from Thee. Amen." (From the "Short Office of the Holy Ghost.")

IX

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST—TRUE GODLINESS

THIS gift has been defined as the power which the Holy Spirit bestows, whereby mankind is enabled to copy the perfect model of the truly godly life. It has for its direct object the guiding of each soul into the *Imitatio Christi.*

It is well worth our while to pause and notice in this relation the essential difference there is in the evolution of the human creature and evolution in the rest of creation. During vast periods of time life has slowly been evolved, as we may conjecture with approximate certitude, from lower forms to higher. It is a strange revelation we get from the study of the remains of those huge and misshapen creatures in the ages before man appeared upon the earth. A terrible conflict must have waged in primeval times. Slowly and with infinite effort the upward stride was made. The mills of God ground exceeding slow, but exceeding sure, and the great progress continued. But though, of course, from our

knowledge of God, we realize it was all the time under His control and supreme guidance, it must have presented the appearance of a mere chaotic and objectless struggle to the creaturely life itself. With the entrance upon the scene of man, a creature capable of receiving the Divine Image, a totally new plane of existence comes to view. For here is a creature capable of thought, capable of self-determination, capable of co-operating with or resisting his destined evolution. From this there follows logically the necessity for the revelation of the pattern man, the Divine Model of Humanity. Otherwise what is he to do? How otherwise is he to know the object of it all? Two voices are within him, a higher and a lower. Which is he to follow? Given the idea of God, and given the idea of man as a creature capable of co-operating with his own development, and the revelation of the model follows as a matter of logical necessity. In Christ we have the Ideal Man. But He is the elder amongst many brethren. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to take of the things of Christ and to show them unto us.

This He does in ways too many for us to consider in this chapter, but certainly in two ways which must not be ignored. It is His special work, by the gift of True Godliness, to *reveal* the perfect life of the Christ to us, and to *convey* grace from the second Adam, the perfect

man, to conform our lives to that model in all things. One function, indeed, is the complement of the other, for to have revealed that perfect life to mankind, and then to have left it for ever incapable of attainment, would have been but to add torture to torture. I do not think there is anything more terrible even here, where we have at best but an imperfect vision of the Christ and but an imperfect knowledge of our own condition, than the contrast there is between our own frail, selfish, and sinful nature, and that wonderful picture of what a human life can be which is portrayed for us in the Gospels. What it must be in the state beyond the grave, when the soul sees itself, for the first time, in all its sinfulness and imperfections, when, for the first time, it sees the King in His beauty, can only be a matter of conjecture. In "The Dream of Gerontius" we have that supreme meeting described in matchless language and dramatic power, in the twofold action of the soul oppressed with the painful yet sweet longing for the continued vision of the gracious Master, and its own imperative sense of sin impelling it to hide itself until the last trace of sin has gone.

The vision of the Saviour is, and must be, the guarantee that not only is the model revealed, but grace is given to attain to it; in this life to some extent, more fully in the life of the waiting soul, amid the loving ministries which come to the soul

in the life beyond the grave; in complete degree, when the Holy Spirit's work is done, and the soul enters upon its final stage. To secure the imitation of Christ is the special work of the Holy Ghost, and this work is effected through the gift of True Godliness.

(A) The truly godly life is revealed in the Christ. To attempt to show how this gift of the Holy Spirit is manifested in the Sacred Humanity would be to attempt once again to write a life of Christ, for the whole life is one long manifestation of this gift. It is not possible to do more than try to trace it in some of the more general, but at the same time salient, features of the Christ.

(1) Look at it for a moment in the life of proportion which is so marked a feature in the life of Christ as we have it in the Gospels. It has been finely said that all the miracles in the Gospels, not excepting the miracle of the Resurrection, do not approach within measurable distance of the miracle of Christ's character. All its varied and beautiful features are not only seen in their full perfection, but seen in their perfect and harmonious relation to each other. With the exception perhaps of Humility and Love (though even these are balanced by corrective qualities), the two basal graces of the Christ Character, it is not easy to single out any one feature which stands out as it does in most characters, and

constitutes the dominant feature of them all. Those two great dividing lines of sex and nationality whose qualities, perhaps, more than all the rest, will reveal the dominating features of human character, are conspicuously, if we may say so, in subordination. When St. Paul says in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, he is expressing something more than the democratic constitution of the Early Church. His words have their final reference to the character of the Christ. Our Lord was the strongest and the bravest of men, but there are times when we bow before the revelation of an almost womanly tenderness in His character. The Christ Who stood with the scourge of small cords in His hands and drave out those who profaned His Father's House, is the same Christ Who shed tears of womanly pity at the grave of Lazarus.

While, according to the flesh, He was born a Jew —and of all the races of mankind the Jewish has the most strongly marked characteristics—there is in His character that element of Catholicity which has called forth the adoring love and the ready sacrifice of all that life holds dearest in all the nations of the world. And He is entirely without the defects of His qualities, that sad limitation to all character: He is strong, but never rough. He is gentle, but never weak. He mixes freely, yet none presume

upon His condescension. He enters into the full life of public duty, but it is after his thirty years of devotion to home duty. He is conspicuous in His devotion to God, yet no less complete in His consecration to the service of man. He is conscious of no sense of sin, and yet devoid of all spiritual pride—the very personification of Humility. With Him faith never degenerates into credulity and superstition; hope never discounts the dark side of human life, and love never sinks to mere good nature. Austerity and leniency are here in strange and beautiful alliance, and in Him both the religious and secular life of the Spirit find their model. Those who are wise unto salvation will always have one of the four Gospels before them for devotional study. If they will ask the Holy Spirit, He will, by this great gift within, reveal the true condition of the Christ-life, and they will be amazed to trace more and more deeply in that fourfold portrait the sublime Pattern of One who had all the noblest characteristics of human nature not only in boundless profusion, but also in exact proportion.

(2) But we must carefully though briefly consider another characteristic feature of the Pattern Head of the Human Race. Few phrases in the Holy Scriptures are more profound, and yet more simple than that remarkable utterance of St. Paul, "We have the mind of Christ." It is important to notice

that the whole context of the passage is replete with reference to the Person and work of the Holy Spirit; but we must let that pass.

The phrase expresses many things, and those amongst the most profound; but in its simplicity it expresses "Christ's way of looking at things." To have the mind of Christ is to be able, to some extent, to look at things as He looked at them. How did Christ look at things? It will still repay us to ask ourselves the question, How did He look at the world of *Nature?* Might we not almost hear Him saying, in the words of perhaps the greatest modern thinker, "It means intensely and it means good." The truly godly man looked upon God's world as permeated with a Divine Presence. How did He look at *human nature?* As something infinitely honourable, capable of receiving the Divine impress, capable of being uplifted to the right hand of God. So amongst the outcasts and off-scourings of the world He moves with reverent regard, the Hope of the hopeless. How did he look at *pain?* As no necessary sign of the Divine displeasure, but as a platform upon which God will work His greatest achievements in human life. How did He look at *pleasure?* As one who entered into the innocent joys of human life, and knew the Father's heart rejoiced in the happiness of His children; but also knew that this life is real and earnest, a place of

probation, a suburb of the Eternal, whence the perfected soul will be called to a wider, richer, fuller life still. How did He look at *wealth?* As a dangerous thing to be carefully watched, for it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God; but also by the grace of God, as opportunity, as something which might be made a friend whose genius would welcome the soul into eternal places. In one word, He looks at all life as opportunity and upon death as gain. Might not His philosophy be summed up in that wise saying of old, "Plan out thy life as though about to live, and live out thy life as though about to die"?

But I do not think in general outline the revelation of the model Life can be regarded as complete in the manifestation of the miracle of perfect proportion in human character, or in the revelation of the right way of looking at things. There is a further stage which is in closest relationship to the Holy Spirit which has been strangely overlooked both in relation to the Adorable Presence of our Lord in the Sacrament of His love and to the spiritual life. It has been touched upon before, but here is the fitting place to consider it at greater length.

(3) I trace the truly godly life as it is revealed to us in the heavenly sphere, for Christ our Master

is seated at the right hand of God, and Humanity has been there developed to unimaginable heights of perfection. We shall do well to consider for a moment this further stage in the godly life in the heavenly sphere. It is a subject to be approached with the utmost delicacy, and all that it means can only be conveyed to us when we too pass into the heavenly sphere. But there is one phase of it which is revealed with great clearness, and which has the most direct lesson for human life here and now. The Second Adam, the great representative Head of Humanity, the Pattern Man, is there specially revealed to us under the aspect of the All Sovereign, of control, of government, of *Kingship*. This is true of that remarkable manifestation of the risen and ascended Christ to St. Stephen, when he cried, "I see the Heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." It is very obvious in the various visions which our Lord granted to St. Paul, but of course it is the central theme of the Revelation of St. John. "Jesus Christ rules the world in spite of appearances to the contrary," might very well be given as the theme of this book. And it is not merely that our Lord, the truly Godly Man, the Man after God's own heart, is seen exercising His kingly office, but the saints are associated with Him in His kingly office. They live and reign with Him during the whole period of the Incarnation and

its extension into human time and history, if we are to trust one of the best interpretations of the Millennial reign of the Saints. The life of control which begins here in the life of true godliness, that wonderful life which is described by St. Paul, when he says: "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged by no man," has the fullest expression in the life beyond the veil. It would almost seem as if the prophetical and the priestly functions of the Christ, which certainly seem to minister to the Kingly office, are reproduced in the life of the baptized, and it is well to reflect upon the essentially *kingly* aspect of the spiritual life which has its beginning here.

(B) Let us turn for a moment to the life of the Church and seek for evidence of this great gift of the power of imitating the pattern life.

(1) The Church of God is the Home of the saints, and the saints are the evidence of the power of the Spirit within her. These are the fairest roses in the garden of the Lord. In reality falling far short, as they would always have been the first to confess, of the perfections of their Master, to us, who can only wonder at the beauty of their character and lament our own shortcomings, they seem almost to have attained. The Catholic Church has always been quick to recognize the wonderful heights in beauty of character to which the natural man may attain, and she has always

paid ungrudging reverence to all that wealth of spiritual beauty which is to be found in religious bodies external to her control. But she claims—and she rightly claims—for her own long roll of saints a mellowness, a harmonized beauty of character, a perfection in the spheres of humility and obedience which cannot be found elsewhere. And indeed it *should* be so, for if the Church is the natural Home of the Saints, no less does she claim to possess the certain means whereby sanctity may be attained. And all this unearthly beauty of the saintly character is of infinite value as evidence of the possibility of conformity to the King of saints. Had *they* not been, alas! we might have said the ideal is impossible—let us admire it, and content ourselves with a lower level. This can never be said in view of the lives of the saints. They were men of like passions with ourselves, and they attained. So may we, for the same sacramental grace is ours which enabled them to bring every thought into the obedience of Christ. Because they attained, we too may hope one day so also to attain, for within the Body the Holy Spirit is always, by virtue of this gift, producing the fairest flowers of Christian character. For the most part they were unknown and unnoticed by human eyes. But, indeed, they were younger brethren of the one Beloved Son in Whom the Father was well

pleased, and on Whom His all-seeing eyes rested with gracious approval. All the four marks of the Church have an active relation to the Holy Spirit. The note of sanctity, however, is the direct outcome of His gift of True Godliness.

(2) But the truly godly life has always consisted, amongst many other things, of nicely-adjusted balances of the rightful claims of God and man upon our allegiance. All along the history of Christianity there can continually in this relation be traced the laws of action and reaction. There have been times when the worship of God, and an exaggerated stress upon the ornate in the Houses of God, and accompaniments of earthly worship and ceremonial have led to the neglect of God's poor and the philanthropic side of the Church's life. And, indeed, there have been times, and those not of remote date, when the adequate worship of the Most High God has been ignored in the interests of an unbalanced philanthropy. Both aspects of the godly life are vital. The service of man can never take the place of the worship of God. If it is dishonouring to God (as indeed it is) to offer Him an exceedingly magnificent worship and neglect His poor, it is equally distressing to imagine that anything will do for the worship of Him before Whom the angels veil their faces, while money is lavishly bestowed upon the sick and suffering. I am sure

there is no point about which Churchmen need a kindly reminder of the truth of things more than about this. Increasingly they will have to learn that the support of the ministry, and the provision of all that is required for the adequate worship of the Most High, is as urgent a duty as the relief of distress, or even the necessities of poor relations. It was the unique glory of the Early Church that, by virtue of this great gift, she shone out conspicuously in both respects. Without in the least restraining the magnifical worship offered to Almighty God, she exhibited a system of practical benevolence which was the admiration of the world. And it always should be so. It is a miserable thing when one hears the cry of Judas re-echoed in the twentieth century, "To what purpose is this waste?" and why was not this ointment sold "and given to the poor," when costly gifts are offered for the maintenance of the worship of God or the adornment of the sanctuary? The note of True Godliness in the Church is always to be traced in a carefully balanced adjustment of each claim.

(C) The practical relation of this gift to the spiritual life is very great.

(1) The elect are chosen for the sake of those who have not yet realized their election. The call to the saintly life comes clearly to each baptized Christian. There is a measure of saintliness

to which by the grace of God all can attain, and that measure is known to God. Few messages in Holy Scripture are more solemnizing than that of our Lord to the angel of the Church of Sardis. "I have not found thy works perfect before God." The word which is here rendered perfect should rather be rendered "up to the mark," or "up to the standard set." We are called to the truly godly life, and our Lord has a standard to which He expects us to attain and to which we *can* attain even on this plane of our existence. A life of true godliness. What Image does it call to our minds? Is it the very embodiment of all that is attractive? It ought to be. Too often it is not, but quite the reverse. Why should goodness too often be a synonym for dulness and unattractiveness? Why should religion, the brightest and best thing in life, too often spoil character? Why should religious people too often bring reproach upon their Master's good name by trifling faults of temper and arrogance and narrowness? The character of the godly man as revealed in Christ is the most beautiful, the most gracious and generous, the most attractive thing in all this wide world. Let it once be reproduced in the Elect, and the world would be converted. The most serious question, therefore, a Christian can put to himself is, "What impression of my Christianity am I giving to my environ-

ment? Does it attract? Does it repel? Of one thing we may be quite sure, that in the last great day, the greatest joy of the Saints of God will be when thousands shall arise to call them blessed, the great and innumerable multitude of the redeemed who have been drawn to religion by the revelation in others of the unearthly beauty of character.

(2) And springing quite naturally from this thought is the power through the Communion of Saints which the Holy Spirit, by virtue of this gift, brings to bear upon the spiritual life. Whatever may have been the abuses connected with this great doctrine—and the present writer is not concerned to deny that there may have been great abuses—the abuse of exaggeration does not approach within measurable distance of the abuse of neglect. Nothing so deepens the spiritual life as meditation upon that great multitude of the blessed who have attained in that other life, and nothing so stimulates the flagging energies of the soul, wearied with its battle against sin, as the thought of that ceaseless stream of intercession which mounts up before God day and night from the spirits of the just men made perfect, the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous. When we meditate upon this wonderful gift which is within us, only waiting to be stirred up into flame, let it recall to our mind the present

power which comes to us from the spiritual and helpful activities of the great company of angels, saints, and martyrs. In the realization that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run with reverent patience the race which is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of our faith.

(3) The true end of religion is character. That is the only thing which *abides*. On the formation of the Christ character within, all Sacraments, prayers, and even worship converge. Without character our worship is a mockery, our prayers are in vain, and our religion both a lamentable failure and an appalling hypocrisy. And there is no standing still in the spiritual life. Unless we are progressing steadily towards the goal, there is certainly retrogression. Alas! degeneration is as common a phenomenon in the spiritual life as it is in the natural. Let us then stir up this gift within, that we may fulfil our part in realizing the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

"Blessed Spirit, kindle in us, we beseech Thee, fresh fervour, and increase in us the Spirit of Godliness. Fill us with yearnings for all that is holy and Divine, removing all self-love and self-complacency, preserving us from carelessness and distractions. Recall every wandering thought, fix every wavering desire, shed Thy purest light

within us, caressing us with Thy sweetness, delighting us with Thy Love. O Blessed Spirit, entrance us with the deepening consciousness of perpetual communion with Thee, that living only under Thy guidance, we may be drawn more and more closely into the peace and joy of an undisturbed contemplation of God. Amen." (From the "Short Office of the Holy Ghost.")

X

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST—HOLY FEAR

HOLY Fear may be defined as that grace of the Holy Spirit in the soul which is really the beginning of wisdom, in that it realizes with special intensity that the supreme loss to the soul would be the deprivation of God. In this it is to be widely distinguished from other kinds of fear. "There is a great difference," says St. Augustine, "between fearing God lest He should chastise us, and fearing Him in dread lest He should withdraw Himself from us." Fear God like one who fears to displease a person whom he loves with much ardour. It, of course, stands far apart from worldly fear, or fear of the consequence of sin, or fear of eternal punishment. When analysed it is found to consist of such an intense realization of the love of God that the possibility, be it ever so remote, of placing ourselves external to that love, or, of resistance to the Divine Will, is regarded as the supreme calamity, to be, as the Apostle says, without God and without hope in the world.

(A) Strictly speaking, it can only be said of our Blessed Lord in the sense of a supreme realization of all that the love of God means, and therefore a supreme sense of the loss it would be to any of His human children to be deprived of it, and we may best trace its presence in Him rather in its effects in this relation.

(1) That our Lord reveals the dread possibility of our losing the beatific vision is abundantly clear. If, on the one hand, the religion of the Incarnation has brought to the world such a knowledge of the love of God as it never could have apart from that supreme manifestation, on the other, it is the greatest folly to ignore that there is, indeed, a very austere side, that the gravity of this life as a period of probation is intensified by it beyond measure, that sin is the most serious fact in life, and that its consequences reach far beyond the confines of this world; that there is a final abode for the finally impenitent, where the soul may be finally excluded from God —its true end; and when, having failed of its true object, it is for ever in the misery of restless dissatisfaction. The tendency of each age has been to erect a conception of God in accordance with its own trend, and the trend of this easy-going age is to erect in place of the God whom Christ revealed, an easy-going Being who will not be severe upon the frailties of mankind.

"Thou thoughtest wickedly that I am even such a one as thyself."

The lenient God, tolerant of sin as of all else, too kind to punish and too gentle to be wrathful, may be a desirable evolution of the Deity according to the modern mind, but He is certainly not the God of the Bible or of the Christian revelation. If in days gone by there was too much stress upon the severe side of the faith, by this time the pendulum has swung far too much to the other side. We need reminding that the gift of Holy Fear within the Christ was a gift which, just because it was fused with the love of God and the love of man, was never afraid to tell the truth about God, the soul, sin, and eternity.

(2) Accordingly we shall trace, as the direct outcome of this gift within the Saviour, that special horror of sin which in its final form is expressed by the phrase, which perhaps is the most terrible in the sacred writings, "The wrath of the Lamb." The gradual education of the human race in the idea of sin is one of the most profitable of theological studies, and one which the age in which we live is most prone to leave untouched. As we know, in dim and faint outline it was present amongst the heathen. In the Jew it is one of the central factors of his religious life, and, as the history of the race progresses, so

does the idea of human guilt. The idea of sin, in the cant phrase of our day, "is no mere grindstone on which the axe of character is sharpened." It is a grievous offence against a personal and a perfectly righteous God, only to be expiated by an intricate system of sacrifices, each detail of which finds its efficacy in some supreme act of atonement yet to be made.

In Christ the idea is intensified, and in two ways. The revelation of the model life cannot but intensify the idea of human guilt, for as it reveals the ideal of human perfection in the Divine mind, so it reveals the actual and the real condition of poor Humanity. The revelation of the Cross also, while its main message, blessed be God, is the unbounded measure of the love of God for sinners, is no less clearly a revelation of the *sinfulness of sin*. It is only as we kneel beneath the shadow of the Cross and gaze at the dying Saviour, and hear the loud cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" that we can begin to realize the guilt and horror of those sins of ours which crucify the Son of Man and put Him to an open shame. The Precious Blood itself proclaims the spirit of Holy Fear. It is for ever warning mankind to shrink in dread and fear from all sin, and the occasions of sin, as not only the most terrible thing in life, with consequences temporal and eternal, but also

because sin is the spear which pierced the broken heart of the ideal Penitent, and the nails which fixed Him to the tree of shame.

(3) Not less clearly may the same grace be traced in that warning about the life of temptation which so clearly underlies the phrase in the prayer of prayers: "Lead us not into temptation." We are so familiar with the prayer that too often we fail to appreciate the great mystery it contains, and the supreme warning against presumption which underlies it. If we reflect that the life of trial is an essential condition of the life of probation, and that from one point of view we can only grow strong by our lifelong battle with temptation, we may at first sight think the ideal prayer would have been: "Let us not want any trial, any temptation, which is necessary for the development of our character." Doubtless there is a truth underlying some such prayer, but our Lord, with His wide knowledge of the awful circumstances of temptation and its final issue, knew too well that the spirit of such a prayer is precisely that spirit of presumption which goes before failure when the necessary trial comes. Holy Fear is the direct creation of Christian Humility, and it is only in that spirit the Christian can hope to pass unscathed through the ordeal which must be his lot. To rush into temptation, to enter rashly where angels fear to tread, to play

with temptation as with fire—all this is to court disaster. Christ was led by the Holy Spirit to be tempted in the wilderness, and in such leading is our only security. There is no grace promised to a presumptuous courting of trial. When the Holy Spirit leads us, there is always the certainty of grace and the secure basis for a claim upon His help. In the Early Church those eager and presumptuous spirits, who boastfully delivered themselves up to the authorities with the hope of the martyr's crown, almost always failed and apostatized when the moment of crisis came. Those who, like St. Cyprian, acted upon the precepts of the Saviour, and who when persecuted in one city fled in a spirit of humility to another, were blessed in their humility; and when the trial came and the blow was struck, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, they sealed their testimony with their blood.

(4) But as the grace of Christian Humility springs directly from this gift and manifests itself so conspicuously in the sphere of temptation, so it may be traced throughout in that which is so marked a feature in our Lord's character. If we bow before the Humility of God as He hides Himself in nature, and can only be found by diligent search; if our adoration gathers strength and power as it contemplates the infinite stooping in the Incarnation; if the hidden and humble

presence of the Saviour under the form of bread and wine in the Eucharist leads us to a perfection of praising and giving of thanks to God for His great glory, at the same time we praise, worship, and adore the Holy Spirit in His relation to the Sacred Humanity, for we trace all this wonderful revelation of Humility to the gift of Holy Fear.

(5) But before we pass to the consideration of this great grace in the life of the Church, we must spare one moment to a consideration of this gift in the Sacred Humanity as it manifests itself in direct relation to the worship of the Father. "There shall rest upon Him the spirit of the fear of the Lord," Isaiah had written of Christ, and in some sense, therefore, we shall look for special signs of this last gift of the Holy Spirit. We have traced it in the fearless communication of the more austere side of truth, in the revelation of the sinfulness of sin, in the warning against presumption in the sphere of temptation, and in the conspicuous grace of humility as the life of God in Christ. But I think its fullest expression will be traced in the interior relation to the Father of the devout life of our Blessed Lord. The veneration and worship of the Father was the central factor of His devotional life, the object of His prayers, the purpose of His life. It is all lived out in realized dependence upon God for all things, in complete trust in that Father Who knoweth

human need before ever it can express itself. Profound submission of the human will to the Father's Will may with equal clearness be traced throughout the life until it culminates in the agony in Gethsemane. In all these broad outlines of the devotional life of our Lord, the life of worship, the life of dependence, and the life of submission, there will be traced very clearly the footprints of the spirit of Holy Fear.

(B) We turn to the Spirit-bearing Body, the Church, for yet further manifestation of this gift. There are so many examples, that a very great difficulty resides in the effort to make a judicious selection.

(1) "I will thank the Lord for giving me warning," says the Psalmist, and woe to that Church with her knowledge of the supreme issues of life who fails to give her children warning. Our Lord loved us far too much not to warn us of the gravity and dangers of life, and our mother, the Church, has never been without a warning voice in all her ages. The object of this little book very emphatically is not controversial, but it is not always possible to avoid topics which of necessity trench upon controversy. To the present writer, amongst the graver signs of a very grave period in the history of religion, is the attempt which is being made by many, for whom in other matters he has the profoundest respect, to remove the

warning clauses in the Athanasian Creed from the Creed altogether, and certainly from recital in the public worship of the Church. These are not days when with safety anything which expresses the austere side of Christianity can be weakened. There is enough in the natural trend of things to lead men to rest in the material and ignore the spiritual, to treat lightly the terrible fact of sin, to live their little life as if this world were all and eternity a dream. We need more, and not less, warning of the gravity of life and its eternal issues, and should that faithful voice be stifled, I can imagine no remorse more awful than that of those who in a frivolous age have lightly helped to remove at least one check upon levity.

It is because the Church knows by long experience the terrible forces of the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil that she trembles with a holy fear for her children if, unwarned, they enter upon life's trials. It is because she knows that in God, and in God alone, can poor wayward human nature rest, that with a holy fear she dreads above all things lest that saving knowledge should be lost, and utters clarion-like her voice of warning. She loves her children too much, and she knows too much to care lest she should be called narrow and illiberal. As the faithful agent of the Holy Spirit in the guidance of mankind to the heavenly

places, she knows that her Lord and Master will reward her for her faithful warning, and that no plight can be more terrible than hers if she failed to warn when she knew the danger, out of deference to the fleeting and shifting spirit of any age of mankind. Her venerable history is the record of one long and faithful warning to her children of the dangers of the broad and the safety of the narrow way, and no less is it a history of the presence of the spirit of Holy Fear.

(2) There is a feature in the life of the Christian Church which is provocative to the natural man, and which ofttimes excites the scorn of her adversaries, from which perhaps most of us have suffered, yet which I am persuaded is amongst her most precious characteristics, and which in itself is a potent evidence of her possession of this priceless gift. The slowness of the Church generally, and of ecclesiastical authority in particular, to receive new truth, or new light upon old truth, is proverbial, so proverbial that at times eager reformers have been only too ready to regard her as amongst the great obstructive forces of life. Yet she knows too much not to realise that the greater part of the little systems of each day must pass as worthless in the trial of life ; that there is nothing new under the sun, that each ancient heresy can masquerade in different guise in modern life, and that amid the contentions of eager,

modern discoverers of new things in religion the precious deposit of the faith may be affected. Her tenacity in the retention of the old is a conspicuous example of the presence of Holy Fear within her; for she dreads with all her loving heart lest the faith of her children should suffer, and she knows with all the accumulated wisdom of two thousand years the worthlessness and the transitory nature of many modern nostrums in religion. The new may sometimes be good, and after careful testing she absorbs that good, but she knows with the wisdom and experience of the aged that the old is better. You may choose your picture. Is it that of some faithful mother who knows the dangers of life and would protect her children from them; or is it that of some jealous and ill-natured tyrant who feels his power slipping away and will preserve it at all costs? I prefer the former, as I believe it to be the true picture, and I recognize that the assimilation of new truth must be gradual and must be carefully weighed, and I would prefer even the slowest possible assimilation of new ways of looking at things, rather than that, in the hasty clutching at new ideas, one jot or tittle of the precious deposit of the faith should be affected. I thank God for the Spirit of Fear in this relation, for it is the fear of a truly loving mother for her children's welfare.

Instinct with the spirit of sacred dread the Church is alarmed for the faith of her children. No less clearly is the same spirit to be traced in the sphere of morals. The Church is the guardian of the faith, and it is her business to see that it be not mutilated nor diminished. She is also the guardian of the moral code of her Master, and cannot surrender one iota of Christ's moral code. The moral code of the different ages of mankind through which she passes may be high or it may be low. It is always a variable quantity. It cannot be so with the Church. In morals she must be as inflexible as in faith. By virtue of this power of Holy Fear she dreads with all her heart all tampering with the sacredness of the marriage tie, whether in the direction of divorce, or in the direction of altering her table of prohibited degrees. To be called narrow-minded, bigoted, out-of-date, is absolutely nothing to her. She has not lived for two thousand years without realizing that her rigorous code of morals in this, as in all else, is vital to the welfare of her children. There is a rightful and sacred fear of wrongdoing, or of condoning wrongdoing, and this she has consistently shown in all ages.

(3) And this naturally leads us to a consideration of the third great exhibition of this great grace, as it may be traced in the life of the Church. The German Emperor once said: "We Branden-

burghers fear God and no one else." It was but the expression of the gift of Holy Fear in the secular life. To pass through life fearless of all men, because filled with the fear of God, is just about the best expression one can get of the rightful exercise of this sublime gift. There have been times in the ages of the Church when the exhibition of a splendid audacity has won for her the admiration of mankind.

Modern days have shown us in France how the clergy can suffer the extremity of poverty for conscience sake; and, unless we very much mistake the signs of the times, the same great opportunity will be afforded to the Church of England, and before very long. But the history of the Church teems with illustrations, from the days of the early martyrs to our own times; and the student of Church history will not have far to seek for examples of the gift of Holy Fear in this relation.

(C) It but remains to notice some examples of the very practical relation this gift bears to the spiritual life of the individual. Much of what has been said of the presence of the gift in Our Blessed Lord and His Church must be said of the relation of the gift to the individual, only in even more special degree.

(1) Holy Fear will fix the eyes of the soul on the dread account which must be rendered at the last great day. If we would stir up into flame the

great gift within, we shall know that all that really matters in life is Christ's verdict upon the life. We shall all stand before His judgment seat, and, in the presence of that supreme review upon the life, the verdict of others, whether favourable or unfavourable, matters very little. It was the abiding recollection of this supreme fact which made the saints so strong, and so little disposed to self-vindication amid misrepresentation and calumny. St. Vincent de Paul, accused in his earlier years of theft, took not the slightest trouble to clear himself of the false charge, being well-assured that, if it served any good purpose, God would clear him here, and that all things would be made manifest in the great day of the Lord.

Holy Fear will indeed reveal to each soul this secret of all true courage. It will do more: in the awe which the presence of such a factor in the soul, when realized, must inevitably bring, it will develop the great Grace of Humility. For is it not only too true that if people sometimes judge us harshly and say unkind and untrue things, they also judge us too favourably and say kind and equally untrue things? Such a verdict will not hold in view of the final judgment of Christ. Holy Fear in such a relation must indeed create both humility and sincerity.

(2) No less certainly will the Holy Spirit, through this wonderful gift, secure to the spiritual

life that detachment from the things of time and of sense without which it cannot seek the heavenly city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. We are to live in the world and in the flesh, yet we are to be in the power of neither. We are to use this world, yet not abuse it. It is pitiable to see the children of God, fitted for the higher life, failing through subservience to the world-spirit or becoming the slaves of the bodily senses. The gift of Holy Fear will teach us to overcome, by not underrating the strength of the forces which are opposed to the spiritual side of life, by watching against them with a wholesome dread of their subtle and most insidious power—in one word, by creating that attitude of detachment in life which enables the soul to place the things of time and sense in their true and subordinate position. As in the case of St. Paul, this gift will lead the Christian to keep under his body, lest, having preached to others, he should be cast away. The shows of life, the ambitions and strife for worldly success, will be subdued by mortification, in slow but sure combat, until the Christian is at length able to present all—body, soul, and spirit—to his Divine Lord in ordered unity.

(3) No less certainly will this gift be traced in an ever-deepening realization, and therefore in an ever-deepening horror, of sin. "The greater the saint the greater the sinner" is true in a sense

which is not always understood. The greater the progress there is in the spiritual life, the deeper is the revelation of sin; for the soul learns to look at sin somewhat after the fashion of God. It is this which accounts for what seems the exaggerated language of the saints about their sinfulness. If they can thus speak of their guilt, what must be ours we fearfully conjecture. Yet they meant it, every word of it. When St. Paul said "sinners of whom I am the chief," he meant it. When Dr. Pusey spoke of himself as being seamed all over with sin, he meant it. "We read in the life of St. "Catherine of Genoa that out of a profound sense "of humiliation she prayed Almighty God to grant "that she might see herself as she was seen in His "sight. Her prayer was heard. The light fell "upon her, and she saw herself and her sins as "God saw them; and having seen that sight of "horror for a moment, she prayed the more "earnestly that the light might be taken away that "she might see herself no longer, because under "the vision of herself she could not exist." This greater realization of the guilt and horror of sin is the direct result of Holy Fear, and perhaps there is nothing the modern Church needs more.

(4) Lastly, we shall trace the exercise of this gift in the presence of a reverential awe of life, of death, of eternity. Levity in these things will be far from those instinct with Holy Fear. Some-

thing of that awe which we are told could be traced on the face of Dean Church as he lay waiting for his final summons will colour the life. Doubtless there will be joy and great joy. Humour also will be there, that certain mark of the best of the saints. All this, but along with it a deep reverence for the world, for mankind, for self, for death, for eternity—above all, for God.

"Blessed Spirit, remove from us all pride and self-confidence, and increase in us the Spirit of Holy Fear. Penetrate our hearts with filial awe and reverence, and guard our thoughts, words, and actions, with the ceaseless consciousness of Thy Presence, and the salutary dread of Thy displeasure. Keep us, O God, in true humility, submission, and watchfulness, that ever seeking to please Thee, ever fearing to offend Thee, we may be hidden with Christ in God, finding in His Heart our sweetest rest.

Grant that nothing may ever separate us from Thee, that in the Day of our account, mercy may triumph over Judgment, and we may stand in our lot in the Joy of our Lord, blessed for evermore. Amen." (From the "Short Office of the Holy Ghost.")

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